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THE NEW YORKER

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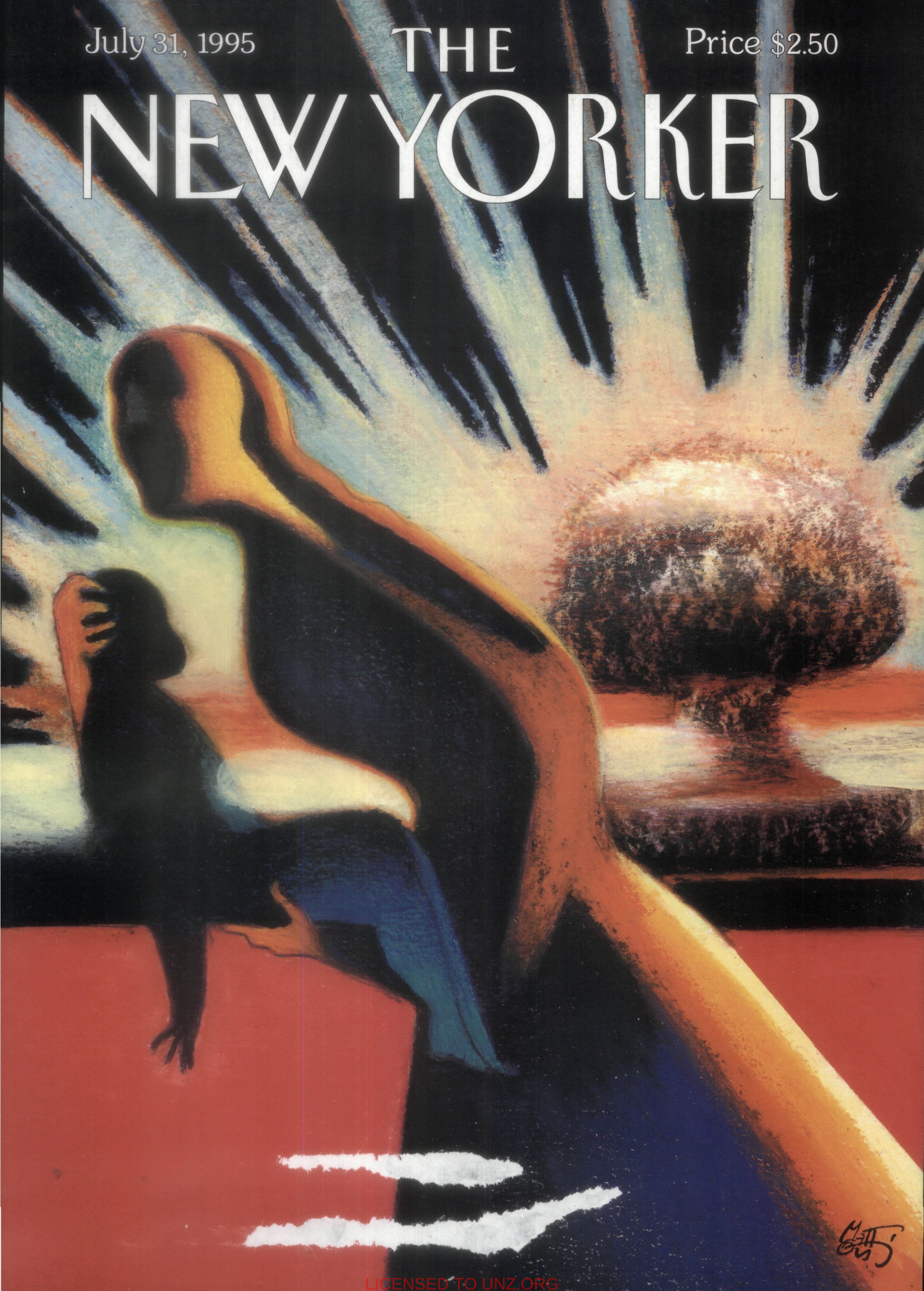

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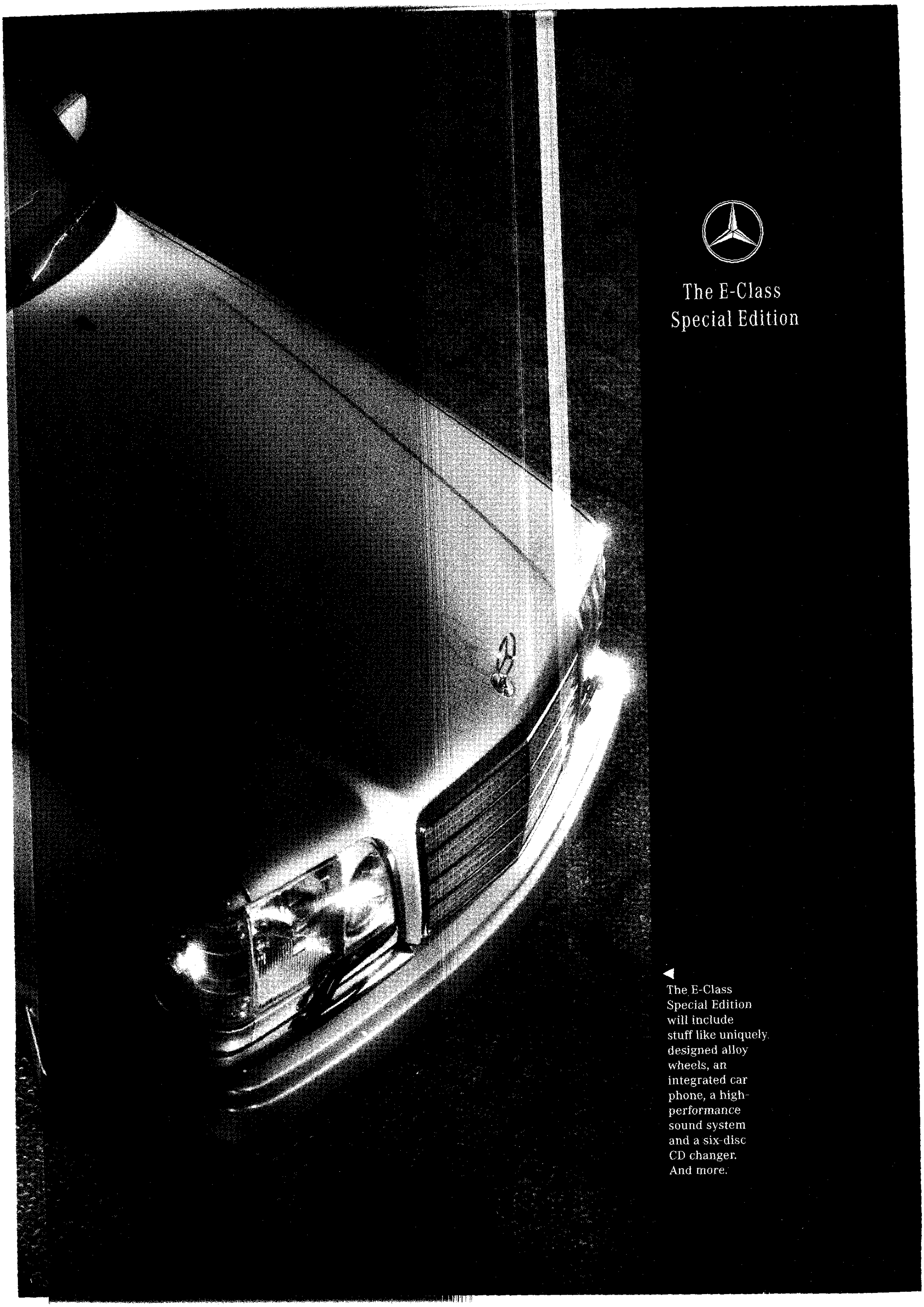

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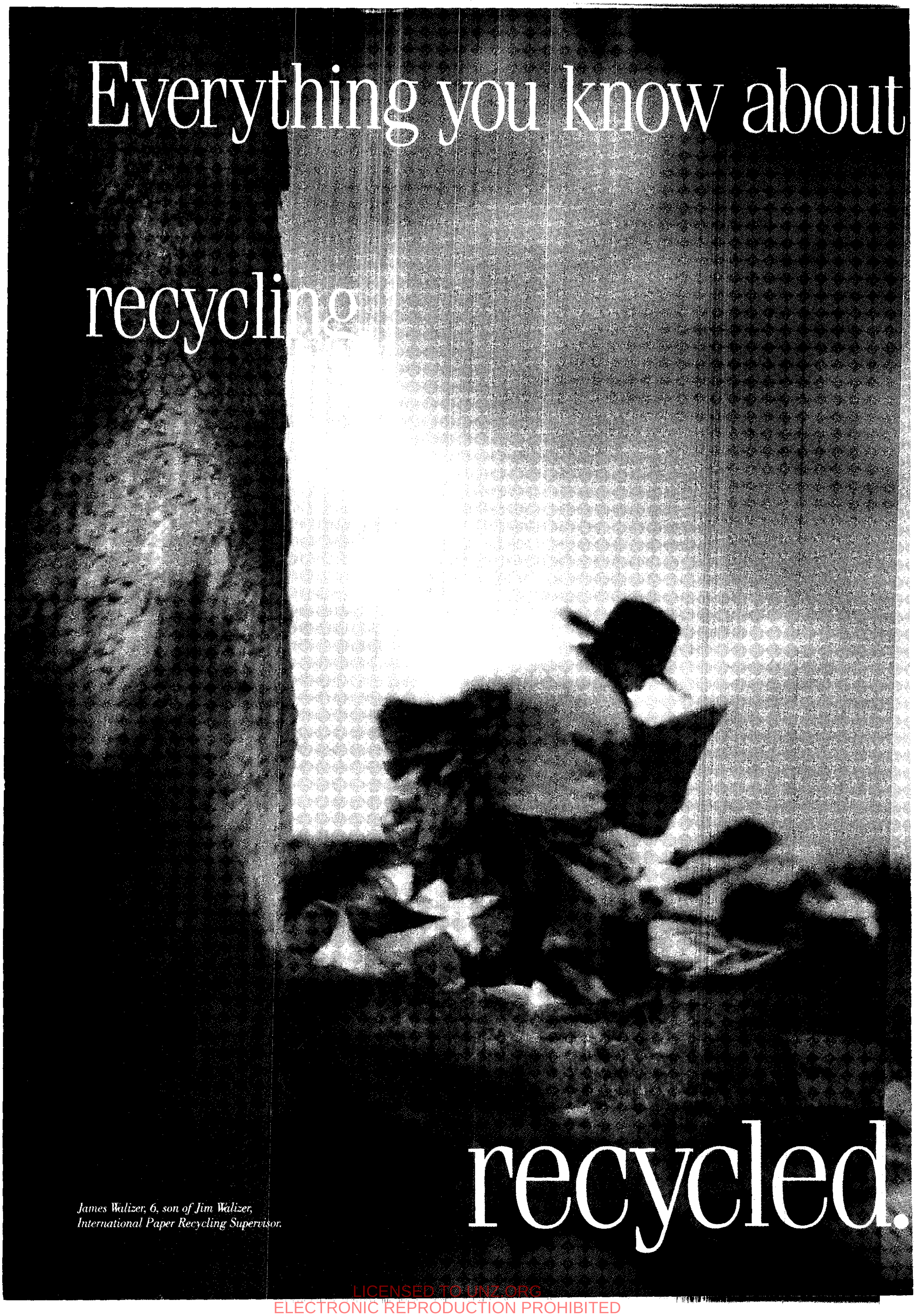
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James Walizer, 6, son of Jim Walizer,
International Paper Recycling Supervisor.

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THE NEW YORKER

JULY 31, 1995

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Captain Steve Wand, Concorde pilot and Senior Training Captain, at the controls of the Concorde simulator

“When you settle on a design that is successful, you want to keep it.”

Steve Wand, Concorde Captain

As Captain Wand says these words, he is sitting in the cockpit of a British Airways Concorde. Yet he is not talking about the aircraft. He is comparing his Rolex GMT-Master II with a Rolex Oyster worn by another pilot: Brian Trubshaw, Chief British Test Pilot for the Concorde development program.

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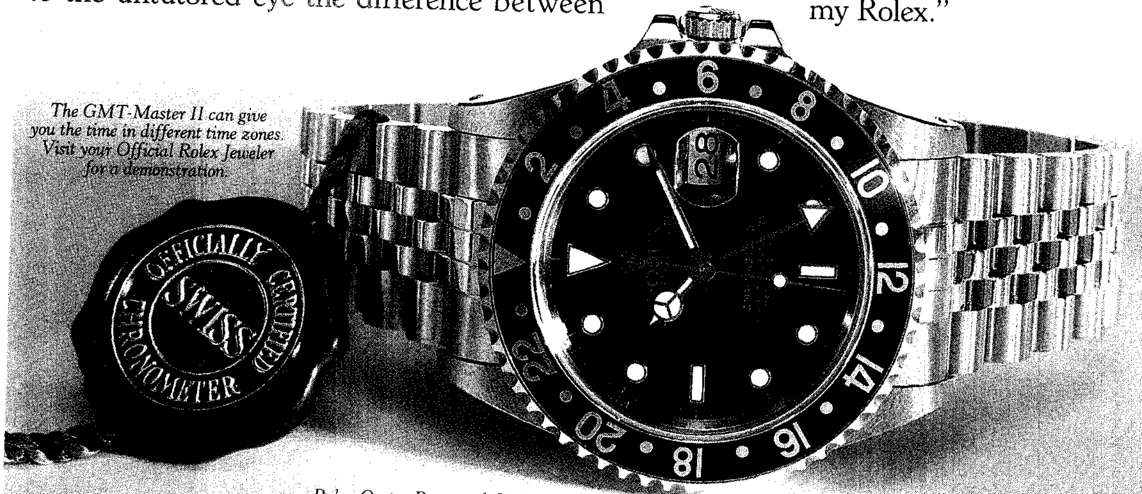
Says Captain Wand, “I don’t think any of us ever become so complacent that we think we’ve had enough of the Concorde.”

Trubshaw agrees, “There’s a tremendous pride in flying the Concorde. It’s a remarkable piece of engineering. Just like my Rolex.”

Brian Trubshaw, test pilot for the Concorde program, wears the same Rolex GMT-Master today that he wore in 1969.



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COMMENT

THE NUCLEAR JUBILEE

The first atomic bombings were also, so far, the last.

IN a memorable essay entitled "Here Is New York," written during the third summer after the summer the atomic bombs fell on Japan, E. B. White reflected on the changes he had seen in his city over the twenty-five years he had worked in it. "The subtlest change in New York is something people don't speak much about but that is in everyone's mind," White wrote. "The city, for the first time in its long history, is destructible. A single flight of planes no bigger than a wedge of geese can quickly end this island fantasy, burn the towers, crumble the bridges, turn the underground passages into lethal chambers, cremate the millions."

Within a few years of the publication of that essay, the hydrogen bomb and the intercontinental ballistic missile had been invented and deployed, the ominous wedge of geese had given way to something more like a single plummeting raptor, and the change White discerned had become something people spoke about a great deal. It is difficult to overestimate—and before long it will begin to be difficult to remember—the degree to which, in White's phrase, "the stubborn fact of annihilation" darkened the imagination of the world during the decades after Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

In an article beginning on page 40 of this issue of *The New Yorker*, Murray Sayle argues that, while the atomic bomb was a big weapon, the decision to use it was not really a big decision. That decision, questioned by very few members of the select group of officials and scientists who were in a position to have an opinion, was simply one more step in a moral and military journey that had begun with the zeppelins in the First World War and had lately reached its apogee, or near-apogee, with the firebombings of Dresden and Tokyo. More people were killed on the night of March 9-10, 1945, in Tokyo than on August 6, 1945, at Hiroshima. Tens of thousands died at Hiroshima from blast and fire; but tens of thousands had died at Tokyo by being asphyxiated or burned alive. Hiroshima added the new horror of slow death from radiation sickness, but slow death from burns is hardly less

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horrible, and usually more painful. The agony of the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki may have been somewhat different in kind from that of the people of Dresden and Tokyo (and Nanking and Leningrad and Warsaw and a thousand other places), but it was not different in degree.

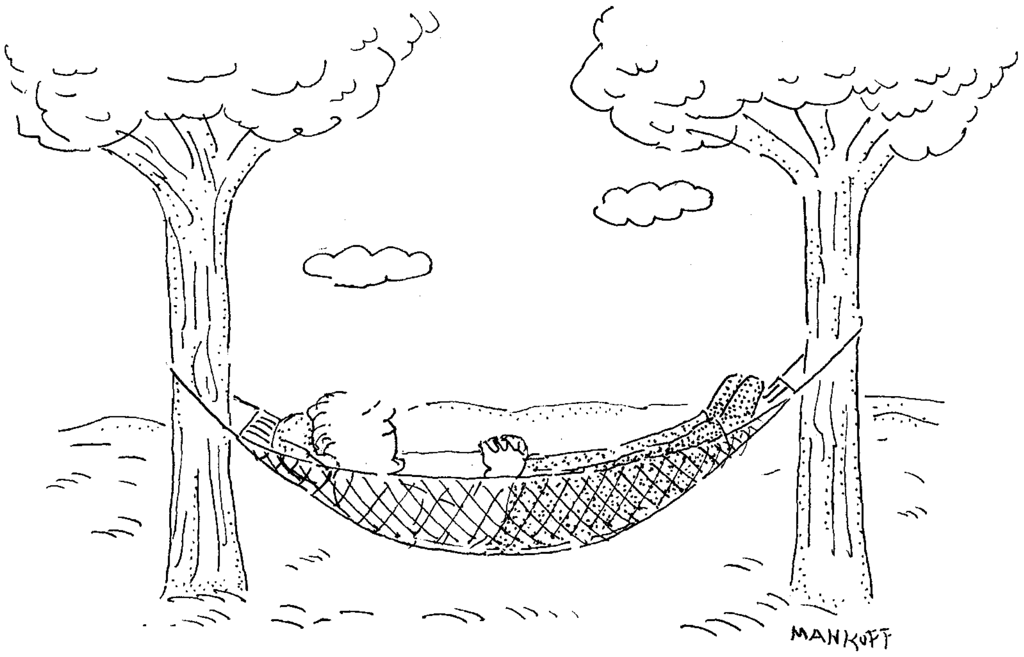
The world's half-century obsession with the atomic bombings, therefore, can finally be traced not to any special sympathy for the sufferings of the Japanese, or for those of the scores of millions of others killed and maimed on all sides of the Second World War, but to the fact that what happened to Hiroshima and Nagasaki was something we could imagine happening to *us.* In contrast, the firebombings came to seem safely anachronistic. Even at the height of the Cold War, the idea that some foreign power might wish to or be able to send thousands of bombers unopposed into American airspace to drop incendiary devices on American cities and turn them into infernos simply never occurred to anyone. But one or two missiles or airplanes carrying nuclear devices—that was very imaginable indeed. And, while the end of the Cold War has brought an end, for the time being, to the threat of global conflagration, it seems to have also increased the likelihood of nuclear weapons' actually being used—not en masse, by powerful governments, but singly, by terrorists or rogue states. The sound of an airplane overhead no longer frightens American and Russian children as it did in the nineteen-fifties, but a rented panel truck near a government building is far from reassuring.

In retrospect, it is remarkable that the first atomic bombings were also, so far, the last. An observer in 1945, if he had been told that the next half-century would bring global confrontation between the Western and the Communist worlds, a hundred wars fought mostly with American and Soviet arms, the development of weapons a thousand times as powerful as the Hiroshima bomb, and the fall of one of the planet's two superpowers, would not have predicted such restraint. If the bomb had not been used on human beings in 1945—if, instead, there had been a demonstration shot, as many have said there should have been, or if the Manhattan Project had missed its deadline—then it would very likely have been used on human beings during the decades of Soviet-American confrontation, and with far more unspeakable results. The bombing of Japan can be seen in this light as a kind of inoculation. And, while this hypothetical benefit of the bombings cannot acquit those who ordered them of moral responsibility for sufferings that were all too real, it does at least suggest the possibility that those sufferings were not in vain.

The atomic bomb has turned out to be useless as a weapon of war in the hands of even marginally rational states. Used against a nuclear power, it would invite immediate and unlimited retaliation. Used against a non-nuclear power, it would instantly discredit the user's cause, no matter how just. No other country has ever been so isolated, so friendless, and so widely loathed as Japan was in 1945; yet, even after the passage of fifty years, America is still condemned, abroad and at home, for having used the bomb against it.

Murray Sayle argues, and persuasively, that it was not the bomb that precipitated Japan's surrender—that the decisive event was the Soviet Union's entry into the Pacific war, which raised the spectre of the division and partial Communization of the Japanese home islands. (The United States was expecting to have to use many more atomic bombs, and to invade Japan.) But if Japan's quick surrender just after the bombings was a coincidence it was a fortunate one, for it gave the A-bomb a mystique, an aura of apocalyptic sudden-death doom, that was an important reason the bomb was not used in the ensuing half century. If a war in which one side had the bomb ended in instantaneous defeat and destruction for the other, then a war in which both sides had the bomb would surely end in instantaneous defeat and destruction for both. And after such a war, as was often remarked, the living would envy the dead. Some revisionist historians have contended that the atomic bombings were aimed less at defeating Japan than at intimidating the Soviet Union. One need not accept that view in order to appreciate that the final blow of the Second World War was also the first blow of the Third—of that final apocalypse which, thanks partly to the involuntary sacrifice of the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, did not come to pass.

—HENDRIK HERTZBERG



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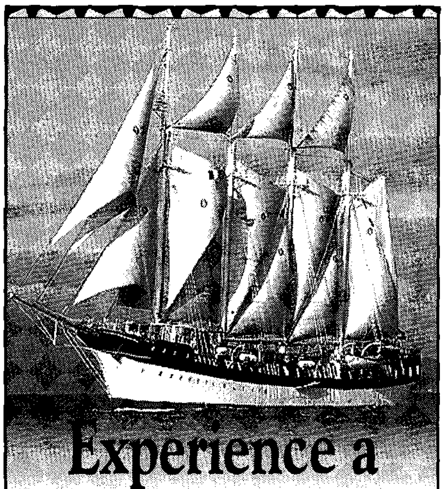

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IN THE MAIL

PARANOIA PIQUE

I find it interesting that you would publish a story belittling the existence of conspiracy theories among people who feel disenfranchised ("The Road to Paranoia," by Michael Kelly, June 19th) while your own magazine has been doggedly chronicling the concentration of power in fewer and fewer hands. Ken Auletta's series of portraits of media biggies, for example, may be intended simply as a glimpse of behind-the-scenes business maneuverings, but such stories, along with your political coverage, reveal a disturbing enchantment with power: a trend that seems to justify some of the so-called paranoia of those described in Mr. Kelly's article. If one's only source of information over the past few years had been *The New Yorker*, one would obviously conclude that strange things are brewing and that democracy is being perverted. One needn't be paranoid to think so.

BEN BOCHNER
Eugene, Ore.

Fringe radicals such as Bob Fletcher needn't fear the demise of democracy: they themselves embody the democratic ideal. Plato characterized democracy as a political state wherein even donkeys are free to bray their political perceptions in public. And, interestingly, fringe radicals like Fletcher are also the primary justification for federal authority. The purpose of a strong central authority is, in essence, to protect us from ourselves. If you were to wake up some morning to find the government gone, replaced by a group of gun-toting radicals determined to establish their version of a well-ordered world in your neighborhood—who you gonna call?

ROBERT BRENNAN
Fairfax, Calif.

Michael Kelly merrily tosses Noam Chomsky and Ramsey Clark into the pot with Bo Gritz, happily stirs in a mixture of wild-eyed theories and accurate observations, and then names the stew "fusion paranoia." But Kelly ignores the cause of people's alarm. It's not simply that "the government isn't working in the interests of the people"; it's that the government (and other members of the so-called "ruling élite") can do the most god-awful things and then lie to us about it. When people who are supposed to have your interests at heart behave like that, you no longer trust them. And that gives birth to a desire to know their motives. It just doesn't help to lump together all the responses to this betrayal. Kelly could have done a far better job by looking at the lies, and at the reasons behind the lies. Ultimately, truthtelling is what will dissipate the air of paranoia, not cutesy analyses of how the far right and the far left are sharing a fantasy.

MICHAEL JACOB
Oakland, Calif.

I find it curious that Mr. Kelly made no mention of the deepest and most virulent outbreak of paranoia in American history: the Cold War. The persistence of the central lie of the Cold War—that the Soviet Union was about to invade Western Europe—goes a long way toward explaining why citizens all around the world profoundly distrust their own governments.

R. SOMMER
Westport, Conn.

It is certainly alarming that there is so much traffic nowadays on the road to paranoia. Equally worrying, however, is the prospect that the delusions of people like Fletcher may divert serious attention from any criticism of government that seems to go beyond (so-called) common sense. At a time when Congress would like to spend billions of dollars on utterly useless weapons while effectively undermining the country's domestic welfare, let us try to keep in mind whose interests are finally served by our pooh-poohing all radical critique as mere pathology.

TAYLOR CARMAN
New York City

A BAD RAP?

Henry Louis Gates, Jr., wrote an engaging story on rappers and poets commingling their art forms on the Lower East Side ("Sudden Def," June 19th), but I've been living in and partaking of that scene for the past four years and I was disappointed to find that the piece was little more than entertainment. Poetry and rap are groundswells, formed and strengthened in the mouths, ears, hearts, and minds of all of us. To focus on two of the scene's promoters, however intelligent, talented, and hip they are, is to miss the real story: how these two separate art forms developed their contemporary edge, and who the poets and rappers are who have been instrumental in that development. Instead of serving as the source of sound bites from a lyric (or verse) or two, these artists deserve to have been engaged in in-depth discussion by Gates. It is the artists themselves, not their promoters, who are the real story.

CAROLYN PEYSER
New York City

I was dismayed by "Sudden Def." There is little artistic relevance in classifying rap music, a definite and unique art form, as poetry. Poetry is an art that was spawned in this country mainly by a dominant white upper-class culture. Rap comes from a poor urban tradition of music which has little to do with the high-culture pretensions of the dominant class. The only reason to classify rap as poetry is political: doing so suggests a completely different history for rap, and implies that it grew out of the established artistic tradition it actually seeks to destroy. Promoters should not try to legitimatize rap for themselves and for upper-class whites by calling it poetry; it is a much more potent social weapon simply as rap.

IAN BLECHER
Oberlin, Ohio

ALL THE WAY TO THE BANK

What tickles me about critics who review "The Bridges of Madison County" (The Current Cinema, Anthony Lane, June 19th) is the savagery that Robert James Waller's work inspires in them. It is not enough for them to dismiss the book or the movie as froth; they must rip into it as though it were a great evil visited on an innocent public. Waller, of course, is the consummate con man. He takes in the millions who believed the story and cried over it, and he gulls those who hated it into treating it as something important. Who's got the last laugh now?

STEPHEN HINRICHS
Canandaigua, N.Y.

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THE THEATRE

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WHAT were you thinking? Your relatives are visiting, and you've promised to take them to the theatre every night, even though you've seen everything already. Oh, don't be such a snob—revisiting a few exemplary hits won't kill you, and it might even restore your jaded sense of wonder.

THE MEGAMUSICAL. You can't say you're crazy about "Sunset Boulevard," but Betty Buckley, who has taken over the role of Norma Desmond, is one of the Broadway musical's few authentic stars; this rare return should be enough to entice you back. And the set will knock the folks' socks off.

THE WORTHY DRAMA. "Having Our Say," the story of the very elderly Delany sisters, embraces humane values while sharply questioning liberal pieties. And Mary Alice's superb performance moves the multiracial audience to raucous laughter and occasional flurries of witnessing.

THE OFF-BROADWAY EXCURSION. A crack ensemble breezes through "Travels with My Aunt," Giles Havergal's adaptation of the 1969 Graham Greene novel. As Aunt Augusta, Jim Dale (who leaves the cast August 1) has a technique as airy and colorful as the balloons that dot the stage.

THE ALFRESCO OUTING. It's too late to catch "The Tempest," at least in Central Park, and "Troilus and Cressida" doesn't begin there until next week, but the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival's production of "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," set during the eighties financial boom, opens July 29 in Garrison, New York. And the train ride upriver, to a tented theatre on the lovely Boscobel estate, will surely soothe your hostly nerves.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Pets!—Five actors perform in both animal and human roles in this revue dedicated to our finest friends. At each show, a real dog and cat will be available for adoption. Helen Butleroff directed and choreographed. Two previews on July 26. Opens July 27 at 7. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 307-4100.)

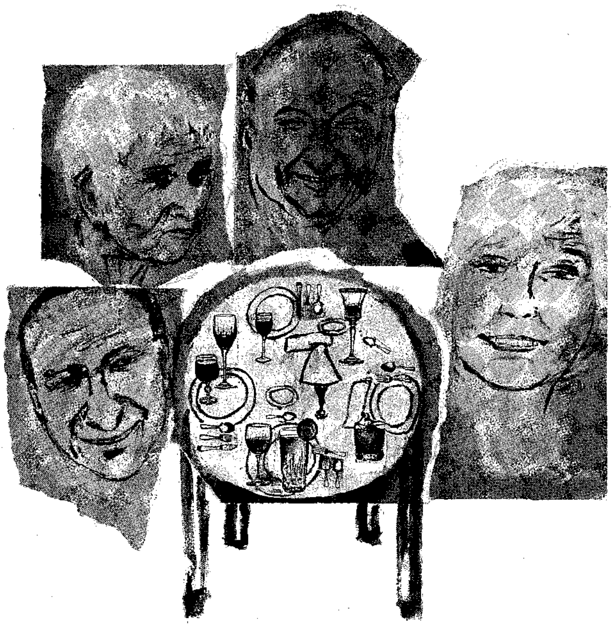
The Two Gentlemen of Verona—The Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival production, set in upstate New York during the go-go days of the late nineteen-eighties, previews July 27-28 and opens July 29 at 8. (Boscobel Restoration, Garrison, N.Y. For ticket information and directions, call 1-914 265-9575.)

OPENED RECENTLY

After-Play—Anne Meara's comedy, about two couples who get together for an after-theatre dinner, stars Ms. Meara, along with Barbara Barrie, Larry Keith, and Merwin Goldsmith. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/13/95.) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

The All-Nude College-Girl Revue—Lisa Faith Phillips' semiautobiographical play, set in a strip-joint dressing room, about a coed who takes an unconventional summer job. (Synchronicity Space, 55 Mercer St. 642-5908. Closes Aug. 6.)

Arcadia—Despite some casting glitches, the American première of Tom Stoppard's 1993 play, which shuttles between 1809 and the present, is an elegant production of an enormous theatrical feat. In a kind of intellectual mystery story, Stoppard provides the audience with the exhilarating illusion of omniscience, allowing us to solve a riddle of history from clues and connections that the characters, caught in time, do not see. Directed by Trevor Nunn. (4/17/95) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)



Larry Keith, Barbara Barrie, Merwin Goldsmith, and Anne Meara, in "After-Play."

KAREN CALDICOTT

Bonhoeffer 1945—The views of the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was executed for his role in an assassination plot against Hitler, are set forth in this drama by D. Paul Thomas, which takes place in the Wehrmacht Military Prison. (McGinn/Cazale, Broadway at 76th St. 279-4200.)

Damn Yankees—Jerry Lewis, the King of Comedy and the King of France, is now, in his Broadway début, the Prince of Darkness—the Devil himself. The old pro delivers the goods. And Charlotte d'Amboise, a sensational Lola, delivers the goods and then some. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100. Closes Aug. 6.)

Death Blues—In his new solo piece, Dudley Saunders uses fantastic tales to convey the anxiety of trying to survive the AIDS epidemic. (Dixon Place, 258 Bowery, near Houston St. 219-3088. Closes July 29.)

Death Defying Acts—Three subpar one-act comedies, by David Mamet, Elaine May, and Woody Allen, that have the words "Written to Order" stamped all over them. (3/20/95) (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

Ecstasy—Mike Leigh's play has reopened at a new theatre. It is set in a dismal North London flat in the winter of 1979; the late-seventies costumes and set are depressingly perfect, and the actors bring the six working-class characters to life with great specificity and vitality. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Having Our Say—Sadie and Bessie Delany, two sisters who have passed the hundred-year mark, presented their vivid life stories in a 1993 best-seller; the book has been adapted beautifully from the page to the stage by Emily Mann, who also directed. Gloria Foster and Mary Alice are brilliant as the sisters, who were taught by their family to "reach high" despite the dogging of Jim Crow. (4/24/95) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Heiress—A revival of Ruth and Augustus Goetz's 1947 adaptation of Henry James's "Washington Square," directed by Gerald Gutierrez. Cherry Jones, who plays the title character, is exquisitely—almost unbearably—vulnerable. And the wonderful Frances Sternhagen is touching and funny as a widowed aunt. (3/20/95) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

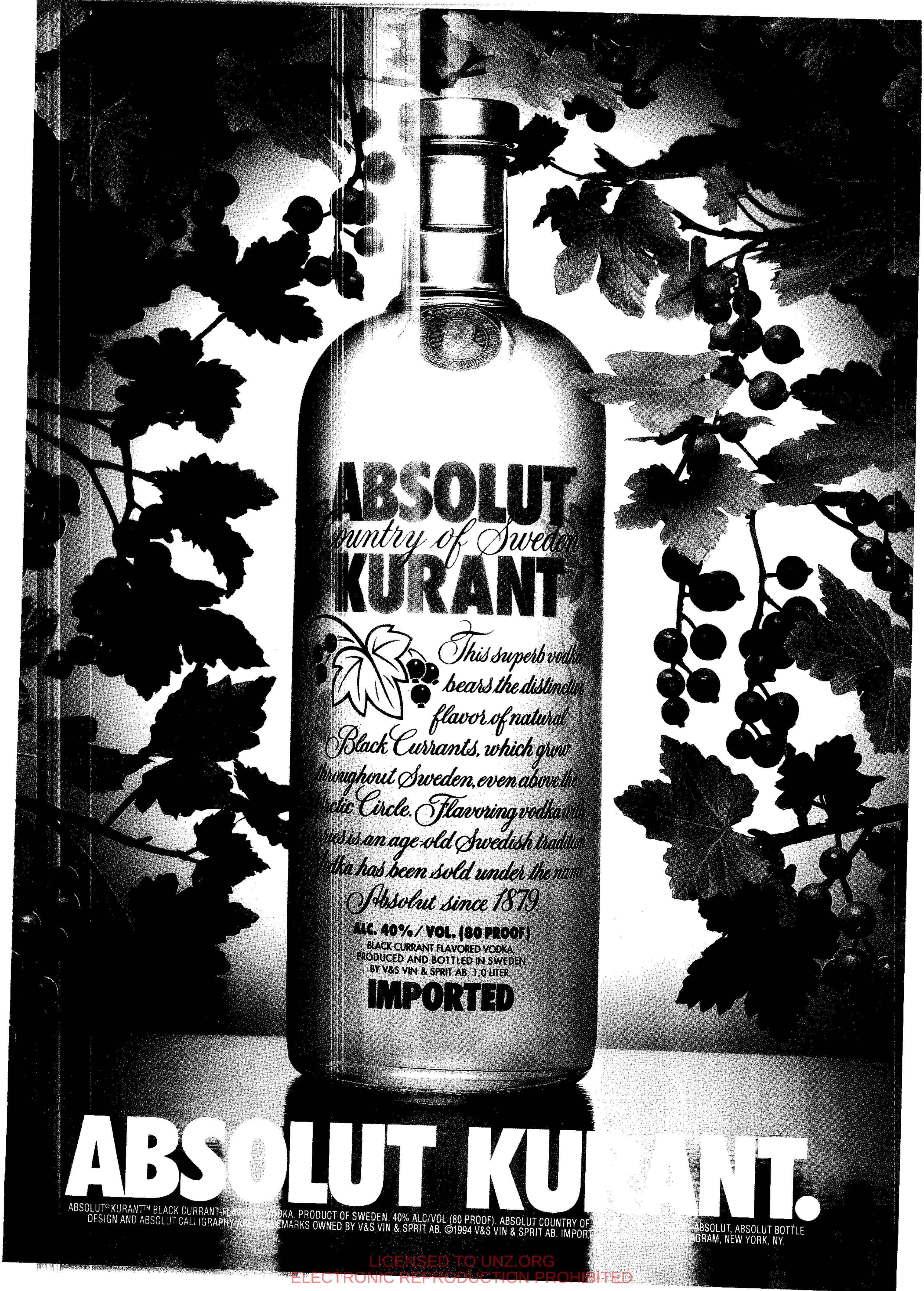
How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying—In this revival of Frank Loesser's 1961 musical, Matthew Broderick has polish and timing, but it's Lillias White's gospel solo in "Brotherhood of Man" that lifts the audience into a zone of joy. As a paradigm for the Broadway musical's con game—winning the public's heart while picking its pocket—her display of guile made glorious is as good as it gets. (4/24/95) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Indiscretions—The brightest spot in this production of Jean Cocteau's "Les Parents Terribles"—a dark comedy about the perversities of desire in family life—is Eileen Atkins, who plays a severely wise spinster with her usual magnetic minimalism. Kathleen Turner, as a hysterically possessive mother, is an unfocussed sprawl with a distractingly unplaceable accent. Roger Rees, Cynthia Nixon, and Jude Law also star, under the direction of Sean Mathias, in this import from London's Royal National Theatre. (5/15/95) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

John & Jen—Andrew Lippa and Tom Greenwald's musical, which spans a forty-year period starting in 1951, explores problems of love and family through the relationships of a sister and a brother and, later on, the sister and her son. The book is often hackneyed and the music repetitive, though the lyrics possess an honest charm. Well staged by Gabriel Barre. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

London Suite—Neil Simon knows how to cater to his audience, but he's serving leftovers: these four one-acts are painfully dated in both their substance and their execution. The main pleasure in this production is Carole Shelley, who provides some much needed comic muscle tone. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

Lust—With crotch-grabbing, bum-pinching, and plenty of exposed pantalets, this musical version of "The Country Wife" lacks the style and subtlety that made William Wycherley's Restoration play a definitive comedy of manners. But a dynamic cast, ornate costumes, and an attractive set enhance the tale. Denis Lawson stars as Horner, the most lecherous man in London. Book, music, and lyrics by the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Heather brothers (Neil, Lea, John, and Charles). (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

Moose Mating—A comic chronicle of heterosexual courtship in New York, by David Grae. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202. Closes Aug. 6.)

The Nightwatch—Three Irish performers—Anto Howard, Fionn Davenport, and Helen James—play watchmen at work in Dublin, in a return production of Mr. Howard's comic play. (Camilla's, 44 Walker St. 925-9456. Closes Aug. 5.)

One Woman Shoe—The brother-and-sister writing team of David and Amy Sedaris bill themselves as the Talent Family, and it's a rare case of truth in advertising. In this encore production of their hysterical show, three clueless women are told by their social-services caseworker (played to Franklin Pangbornian perfection by David Rakoff) that they must put on one-woman shows in order to keep their benefit checks coming. The five cast members are all funny in a number of roles, but Ms. Sedaris, with her chipmunk's overbite and her remarkably plastic face, is extraordinary. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710.)

The Only Thing Worse You Could Have Told Me . . .—Dan Butler offers a procession of characters from the real world of contemporary gay culture, moving seamlessly from one monologue to the next in a one-man show that is by turns hilarious, infuriating, sad, and uplifting—a charmer. Mr. Butler continues with the show through Aug. 6; Greg Louganis takes over on Aug. 8. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 307-4100.)

Party—In David Dillon's comedy, seven gay men get together to play a strip version of truth or dare, with terrifically funny (if occasionally didactic) results. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.)

The Play's the Thing—This revival of Ferenc Molnár's clever confection lacks a spirit of farcical possibility—it's all leaden inevitability. Peter Frechette, as the egocentric playwright who manipulates the action onstage, excels at neurotic thoughtfulness, but he makes for a limp catalyst. The bright spots are the sparky J. Smith-Cameron, playing a prima-donna actress, and Keith Reddin, as antic as ever as a sweaty factotum. Gloria Muzio directed; Stephan Olson designed the beautiful set—the Italian villa of your dreams—and, hands down, wins the award for Best Curtain of 1995. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Rob Becker's Defending the Caveman—A hundred-minute standup routine. Some of Becker's examples of discontent between the sexes are very funny (a lot of vigorous nodding goes on in the theatre—never by men and women at the same time), but a fair number of them are shopworn. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

Smokey Joe's Café—The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—A feast of early rock and roll, performed by a cast with Grade A lungs and legs. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

The Springhill Singing Disaster—Karen Trott's one-woman show is an affectionate (but never sappy) coming-of-age story about a girl and her guitar, who are constant companions from the fourth grade on, and it's refreshingly unhip. Trott has a good, folkie voice, but she isn't above sending up her younger, off-key self. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Sunset Boulevard—Betty Buckley takes on the monumental role of Norma Desmond, in Andrew Lloyd Webber's homage to Billy Wilder and Charles Brackett's 1950 fable of Hollywood corruption and dementia. (12/5/94) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4007.)

Swingtime Canteen—A re-creation of a 1944 U.S.O. concert, performed in a night club. Extraneous bits of plot threaten to derail the show, but the lovely songs, done with verve and charm, carry the day. Charles Busch replaces Alison Fraser on Aug. 1. (Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Sylvia—In A. R. Gurney's new comedy, Sarah Jessica Parker, as a dog named Sylvia (who says there aren't roles for women?), brings meaning to the life of a middle-aged currency trader (John Cunningham) while driving a canine-shaped wedge between him and his wife (Mariette Hartley). Parker has some funny moments, but this upper-middle-class fairy tale settles too soon into a monotonous sweetness; it lacks bite. John Tillinger directed. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

That's What You Said—The improv company Chicago City Limits presents a brand-new revue, featuring its ever-popular five-minute musical. (Chicago City Limits Theatre, First Ave. at 61st St. 888-5233.)

Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind—The Neo-Futurists, a troupe from Chicago, perform thirty original two-minute plays in one hour. They change the program each night, and when there's a full house they order a pizza. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 330-8087.)

Travels with My Aunt—Giles Havergal, directing his own witty adaptation of Graham Greene's novel, has captured the book's amusingly puzzled tone with his playful, inventive (though overlong) staging. Four wildly different actors all play Henry Pulling, the staid retired banker whose eccentric Aunt Augusta drags him into her international adventures. Jim Dale (whose final performance in the show is Aug. 1), doubles as Aunt Augusta, and the other three skillfully handle some twenty additional parts. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. 420-8000.)

Twelve Dreams—A revival of James Lapine's 1981 play, which he adapted from Carl Jung's case study of a young girl whose dreams portended her own death. It doesn't add up to much, but the dream sequences are a striking amalgam of the everyday and the surreal, and the performances are strong. Directed by Mr. Lapine. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Closes Aug. 6.)

2 Boys in a Bed on a Cold Winter's Night—James Edwin Parker's comic tale is about how not to behave during a one-night stand, but it's also a sharp-eyed exploration of emotional intimacy. Robert Gomes and Michael Curry make the grown-up boys sympathetic without being mushy. Directed by Thomas Caruso. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 279-4200.)

LONG RUNS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP / TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **GREASE!:** Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **LOVE! VALOUR! COMPASSION!:** Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **SHOW BOAT:** Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **THREE TALL WOMEN:** Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200.

DANCE

IN TOWN

Bill T. Jones / Max Roach / Toni Morrison—The dancer, the drummer, and the novelist (two MacArthurs and a Nobel) perform "Degga," their collaborative work. (Alice Tully Hall. 721-6500. July 26-27 at 8.)

"An Uncertain Hour"—Martha Clarke calls her latest hybrid of theatre, dance, and music a tone poem; it is, she says, "about things that might have happened, relationships that might have been—about possibility and loss. It's sad." The setting is a Bavarian lakeside on a pre-Second World War summer night, and the songs are by Wolf, Schumann, and Berg. The fortysomething dancers include Gary Chryst, Martine van Hamel, and the fabulous Rob Besserer. (John Jay Theatre, 10th Ave. at 58th St. 721-6500. July 26-29 at 8 and July 30 at 3.)

Pilobolus Dance Theatre—July 26 and July 31 at 8: "The Particle Zoo," "Duet," "Quatrejeux," "Pyramid of the Moon," and "Sweet Purgatory." . . . ¶ July 27-28 at 8 and July 29 at 2: "The Doubling Cube," a solo from "The Empty Suitor," "Shizen," and "Rejoyce." . . . ¶ July 29 and Aug. 1 at 8: "Collideoscope," "Masters of Ceremony," "Animundi," "Walklyndon," and "Day Two." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through Aug. 4.)

Noche Flamenca—The final week for the seven singers, dancers, and musicians from Madrid. At the end of individual sung phrases, guitar passes, and thunderous dance improvisations, the performers onstage shout their encouragement (*"Dále, Antonio. ¡Eso es!"*). When the audience joins in, the intimate Theatre 80 takes on the feel of a gypsy encampment. (80 St. Marks Pl. 924-0077. July 26-30 at 8.)

Doug Varone and Dancers / Sungsoo Ahn Pick-Up Group—Varone's troupe will dance "Rise" and "Strict Love" to seventies music, and an excerpt from "Cow Cow Blues" to the jitterbug beat of Bob Zurke and his Delta Rhythm Band. The eight dancers of the Sungsoo Ahn Pick-Up Group will perform "Bim" and "Queen" to the Indian techno music known as bhangra. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 28 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

Dances for Wave Hill—Site-specific works made for several locations in the Bronx garden. Choreographer Andrea E. Woods dances two solos, "Peace Piece No. 1" and "Souloworks," and excerpts from composer David Pleasant's "Ballad of the Black Cowboy"; choreographer Neta Pulvermacher presents "Postcards," created with and danced by children from the Riverdale Neighborhood House. (W. 249th St. at Independence Ave., the Bronx. For information, call 1-718 549-3200. July 26 at 6:30 and July 30 at 5.)

Noche Flamenca, at Theatre 80.

ALEXIS RODRIGUEZ-DUARTE

OUT OF TOWN

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival—July 26-27 at 8, July 28 at 8:30, and July 29 at 2 and 8:30: The Mark Morris Dance Group, in "Grand Duo," "One Charming Night," "The Office," and "New Love Song Waltzes." . . . ¶ July 27 at 7, July 28 at 8, July 29 at 5, and July 30 at 7: Jazz-dance by Danny Buraczeski. . . . ¶ July 26 at 6:30 and July 29 at 7: Amy Rose. (Becket, Mass. For information about tickets, call 1-413 243-0745.)

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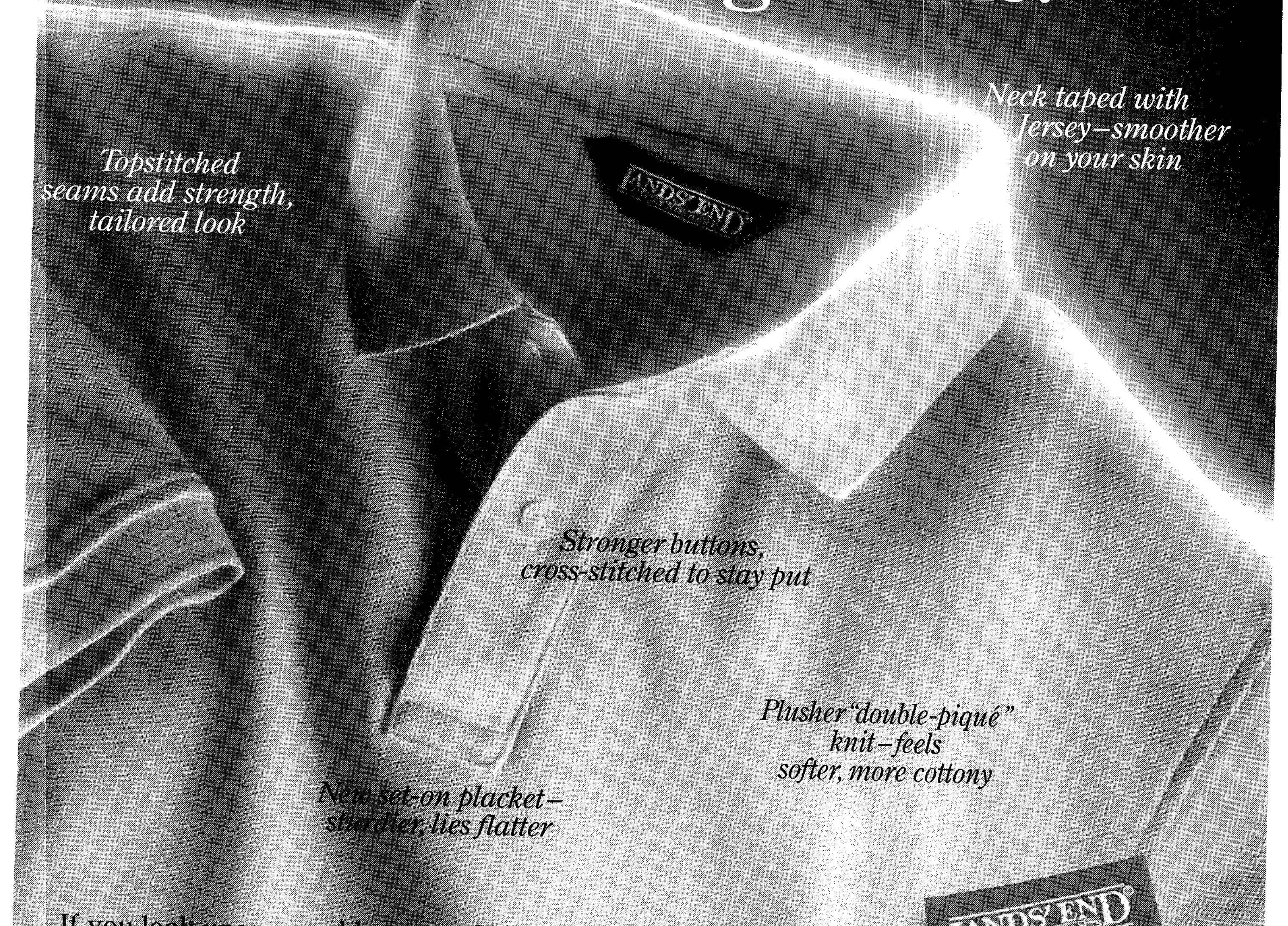
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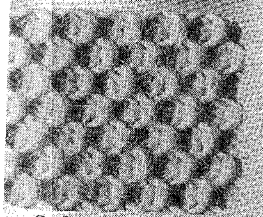

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NIGHT LIFE

Winning Scores

THE Club Foot Orchestra specializes in scouring away the must that can collect on vintage movies. The ten-piece San Francisco-based ensemble performs its own accompaniments to great silent films (Lang's "Metropolis," Murnau's "Nosferatu") but doesn't limit itself to the sounds of the silent era. Drawing on sources from Bizet and Stravinsky to Stephen Foster and Ry Cooder, the orchestra riffs on imagery and offers a running musical commentary to the story line. A Club Foot score may italicize or mimic the action or carom off it, with tempos that match what's happening onscreen or link up with underlying rhythms. What it won't do is slam home a single point or a simple mood.

This month the orchestra returns to New York for the first time since 1991. Its score for Buster Keaton's "Sherlock Jr." (July 30, at the Knitting Factory) drops into mournful guitar licks after Keaton is mortified in front of his true love; later, when he rescues the heroine with a fast car and an exploding billiard ball, it echoes the James Bond theme. The music for G. W. Pabst's "Pandora's Box" (July 27-28, at the Walter Reade Theatre) includes a brief snatch from "Carmen" in honor of Lulu, Louise Brooks's monumental femme fatale. But the over-all tone is a sultry irony worthy of Kurt Weill: a lush, scrappy cynicism that's very Brooks, very Pabst, and very twentieth century.

CONCERTS

"THREE TENORS ON 92ND STREET"—No, not *those* three tenors, but three great saxophonists: Flip Phillips, Frank Wess, and Scott Hamilton, who keep the spirts of Lester Young, Ben Webster, and Coleman Hawkins alive. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. July 26 at 8.)

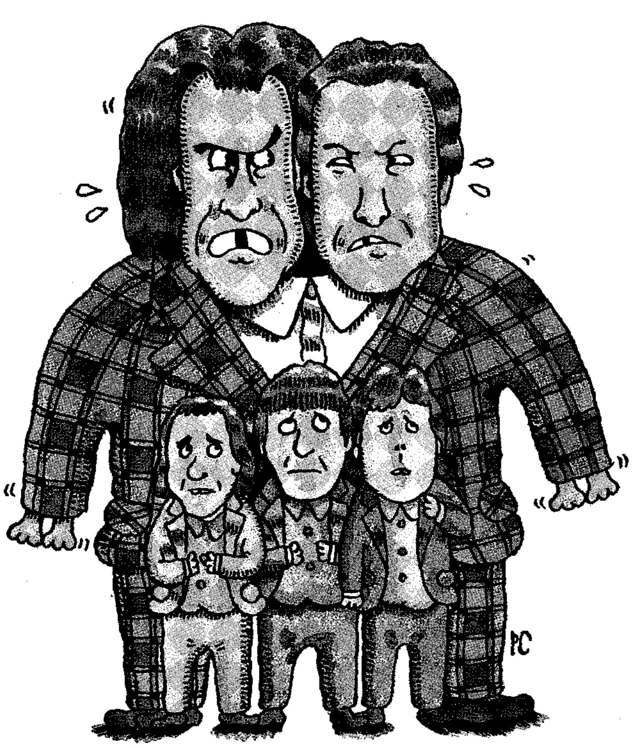
LYLE LOVETT—The wry, dapper Texan with the ten-gallon haircut has spent the past few years in tabloid hell. Now he's returned to his original incarnation, a wonderfully strange singer-songwriter. His most recent album, "I Love Everybody," is another impeccable collection of delicate, heartfelt, and weirdly ironic songs, and a lovely mélange of folk, blues, and R. & B. His live shows are fun; they're also surprisingly emotional. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. July 27 at 8.)

CLUB FOOT ORCHESTRA—Performing live accompaniment to G. W. Pabst's "Pandora's Box." (Walter Read Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. 875-5601. July 27-28 at 8.)

REO SPEEDWAGON / FLEETWOOD MAC / PAT BENATAR—There's something eerily comforting about this triple bill, in a Frank Capra sort of way. Maybe it's the heroic return of Benatar from spandex hell. Or perhaps it's the chance to hear REO make good on that heartwarming 1980 promise to "Keep on Loving You." Or could it simply be the kooky way that this all-new, regular-guy edition of Fleetwood Mac continues to sell out venues, even though the band's long-departed songwriters wouldn't touch the current lineup with a ten-foot royalty check? With Orleans. (Jones Beach Theatre. 1-516 221-1000. July 28 at 8.)

GLADYS KNIGHT / FRANKIE BEVERLY & MAZE—An evening of old-school R. & B. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. July 28 at 8.)

PAUL ANKA—He's written more than eight hundred songs, and it's frightening to think how many of them are lodged permanently in our brains. There's "My Way," of course (recorded by everyone from Sinatra to Vicious), "Put Your Head on My Shoulder," "You're Having My Baby," and even the theme from "The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson." Probably the only thing that this Canadian has ever done wrong is invest in the lowly Ottawa Senators. (Westbury Music Fair. 1-516 334-0800. July 28-29 at 8.)



The Kinks, at Westbury Music Fair.

PAUL CORIO

LOLLAPALOOZA—The alternative movable feast. This year's headliner, Sonic Youth, shares the spotlight with Hole, Cypress Hill, Pavement, Beck, the Jesus Lizard, and the Mighty Mighty Bosstones, along with a second stage of lesser-known bands, all manner of skateboard paraphernalia, and a body-piercing kiosk. (Downing Stadium, Randall's Island. 307-7171. July 28-29 at 2.)

THE MIGHTY SPARROW—Soca in the park. (Prospect Park Bandshell, Prospect Park, Brooklyn. For information, call 1-718 855-7882. July 28 at 7.)

SOUL COUGHING—Last year, this excellent downtown combo released its début album, "Ruby Vroom," an impressive slab of tiny, insinuating melodies and skittering acid-jazz grooves overrun with obscure sound bites, phone conversations, Howlin' Wolf samples, and more puzzling allusions than the "Cantos" of Ezra Pound. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 29 at 3.)

MONTELL JORDEN / TLC / BOYZ II MEN / MARY J. BLIGE—Four acts—a freshman and three sophomores—that dominate both the pop *and* the black charts like nobody since the early seventies. On "This Is How We Do It," his uneven début, Jorden, a six-foot-eight-inch Pepperdine grad, combines rap braggadocio with a whisper-thin tenor—and little else. Better is the fab and fashionable female trio TLC, whose "CrazySexyCool" is a superior second effort. Led by the clear alto of Tionne (T-Boz) Watkins and the fiery Lisa (Left Eye) Lopes, these prime practitioners of New Jill Swing should be around for the long haul. Boyz II Men, whose recent "II" is a cute collection of funky vamps and bittersweet ballads, are the latest in the grand R. & B. tradition of superb vocal groups. They've been known to overdo the shimmering harmonies, but live, they never cheat the audience. Blige is the wild card. Her much underrated "My Life" was a sweet coming-of-age revelation. In concert, though, her inconsistency is reminiscent of Al Green: when she's good, she's great; when she's bad . . . Either way, she'll provide some much needed drama. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. July 29 at 7.)

ALTAN / STEVE RILEY & THE MAMOU PLAYBOYS—Proof positive that the folks at SummerStage are fearless genre benders. Formed in the late eighties by Belfast-born flutist Frankie Kennedy (who died last fall) and his wife, the Donegal fiddler and heart-melting singer Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, Altan has set new standards for Irish music. (Considering that this is a field that, like bluegrass, takes excellence for granted, that's nothing to shake a shillelagh at.) The Mamou Playboys play what might be called the new zydeco. Get ready for an afternoon of jigs, reels, and blazing washboards. (Central Park SummerStage. July 30 at 3.)

THE KINKS—They've outlived every other British Invasion band except the Stones, and as long as Ray Davies has a songwriting bone in his body (and he and his brother Dave don't kill each other), there will always be a Kinks. Far more influential than they're usually given credit for (even Pete Townshend admits he stole from them), these irrepressible Rock and Roll Hall of Famers should be as incorrigible as ever: when the band played West Point a few years back, they had the cadets singing along to "Lola." Now *that's* kinky. (Westbury Music Fair. July 31-Aug. 1 at 8.)

CLUBS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

A.K.A., 77 W. Houston St., at Wooster St. (673-7325)—Hip-hop, jazz, and world beat meet in this small, velvet-draped club. July 27: **CHINGA CHAVIN**, perhaps the world's leading practitioner of the unusual sub-genre known as country porn.

BLARNEY STAR, 43 Murray St. (732-2873)—Home to fine Irish music every Friday night.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Decent sight lines, great greasy food, prodigiously talented waitresses, and a consistent roster of high-quality acts. July 28: Another "No Risk" evening of up-and-coming bands.

BROWNIES, 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—Your East Village rock-and-roll emporium. July 29: **FALAFAL MAFIA.** July 31: **EMMA PEEL.**

CAFÉ SIN-É, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—A small peach-walled storefront usually given over to a young sandals-and-socks sort of crowd.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving. July 26: Sophia's Toy. . . . ¶ Next door, at CB's Gallery, Tyrone Davis leads a folk roundup on July 26.

Chicago B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—Dedicated to the music of the Windy City. July 26-27: Guitarist Larry Burton.

The Cooler, 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785)—A lavender and stainless-steel dungeon deep in the heart of the meat district. Tuesday nights are given over to experimental d.j. spinoffs.

Downtime, 251 W. 30th St. (695-2747)—A friendly split-level bar with a dazzling quasi-Cubist paint job and an above-average pool table.

Duplex, 61 Christopher St., at Seventh Ave. (255-5438)—Everyone is a star here—the pianist, the bartender, the waiters, and the audience. The fabulous **dressing room divas** are in the house every Friday night.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar hidden inside the Time Café. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is a fine spot to take in a show. July 26: **Magnetic Fields.** The Fields' mastermind, Stephin Merritt, recently enlisted a Who's Who of alternative-rock vocalists for a New Wave side project called The 6ths, but he claims to have no affinity for the genre. Instead, he likens his sophisticated, spare synth-pop to seventies-era Elton John and Abba. He's become one of New York's most revered underground artists and a reluctant antihero whose work is as catchy as his dour bon mots are clever. The **Mingus Big Band** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Flannery's, 205 W. 14th St. (929-9589)—A well-scrubbed, amiable Irish pub with many of the classic features (pints of Guinness, non-stop TV sports) and a few of the near-classics (a CD jukebox, a portrait of Elvis).

Gonzalez y Gonzalez, 625 Broadway, at Houston St. (473-8787)—Loud, brash, and big—de rigueur for the lower-Broadway dining scene. The stage is in the rear, about a city block from the entrance.

Ibis Supper Club, 327 W. 44th St. (262-1111)—Live music, belly dancing, and an honest-to-God whirling dervish, every Wednesday through Sunday.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—This sprawling two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. July 26: **Dogstar.** Is there no task that Keanu Reeves cannot master? It appears that the man *Entertainment Weekly* calls a "laconic stud-muffin" also plays the guitar. Dogstar is his band. With Tuscadero, D.C.'s finest coed combo. July 27: **John Lurie and the Lounge Lizards.** . . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday, with sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Boston hunk oddity **Jonathan Richman** will preach to the converted on July 28-29. Richman's songs, his stories, and his bare chest—should he decide to dispense with his shirt—are proud and fascinating assets, and no other rocker around can reap such enchantment from the mundane.

Limelight, Sixth Ave. at 20th St. (807-7850)—A church turned eighties hot spot, this unholy venue currently plays host to a variety of techno and alternative acts. **Morbid Angel** entertains on July 30. Wednesday night is Disco 2000.

Ludlow Street Café, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—An unassuming basement restaurant-bar, where you can drink cheap and catch live music nightly. Mondays belong to **Beat Rodeo,** a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mixture of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, Velvets, and various pop curiosities.

Manny's Car Wash, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—The Upper East Side blues. Guitarist **Luther Allison** plays on Aug. 1.

Match, 160 Mercer St. (343-0020)—This tragically hip SoHo *boîte* is the place to be every Sunday night, thanks to the **Shorty Jackson Legacy Blues Band.** Dining.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—Many of the bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. July 30: Excellent country-rock with the **Delavantes.**

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—Past the long bar, you'll find an exposed-brick room and a stage packed with some very hip rock acts. The **Swans** float in on July 26-27. **Gene,** the well-groomed English combo, disembarks on July 28. Gene is to the Smiths what the Jam was to the Who. Too bad it doesn't have a songwriter like Paul Weller, but then again, a scissor-kicking Morrissey tribute band would be a bit jarring, wouldn't it? July 29: Rock from Finland, with **Laika.**

Monkey Bar, 60 E. 54th St. (838-2600)—Beyond the monkey murals, there's a bright see-and-be-seen dining arena that's perfect for committing high-profile indiscretions in a strapless gown. But the place to be is the dark and crowded bar up front, by the fine pianist, where the bar stools look like stuffed olives. You perch on the pimiento. Dining.

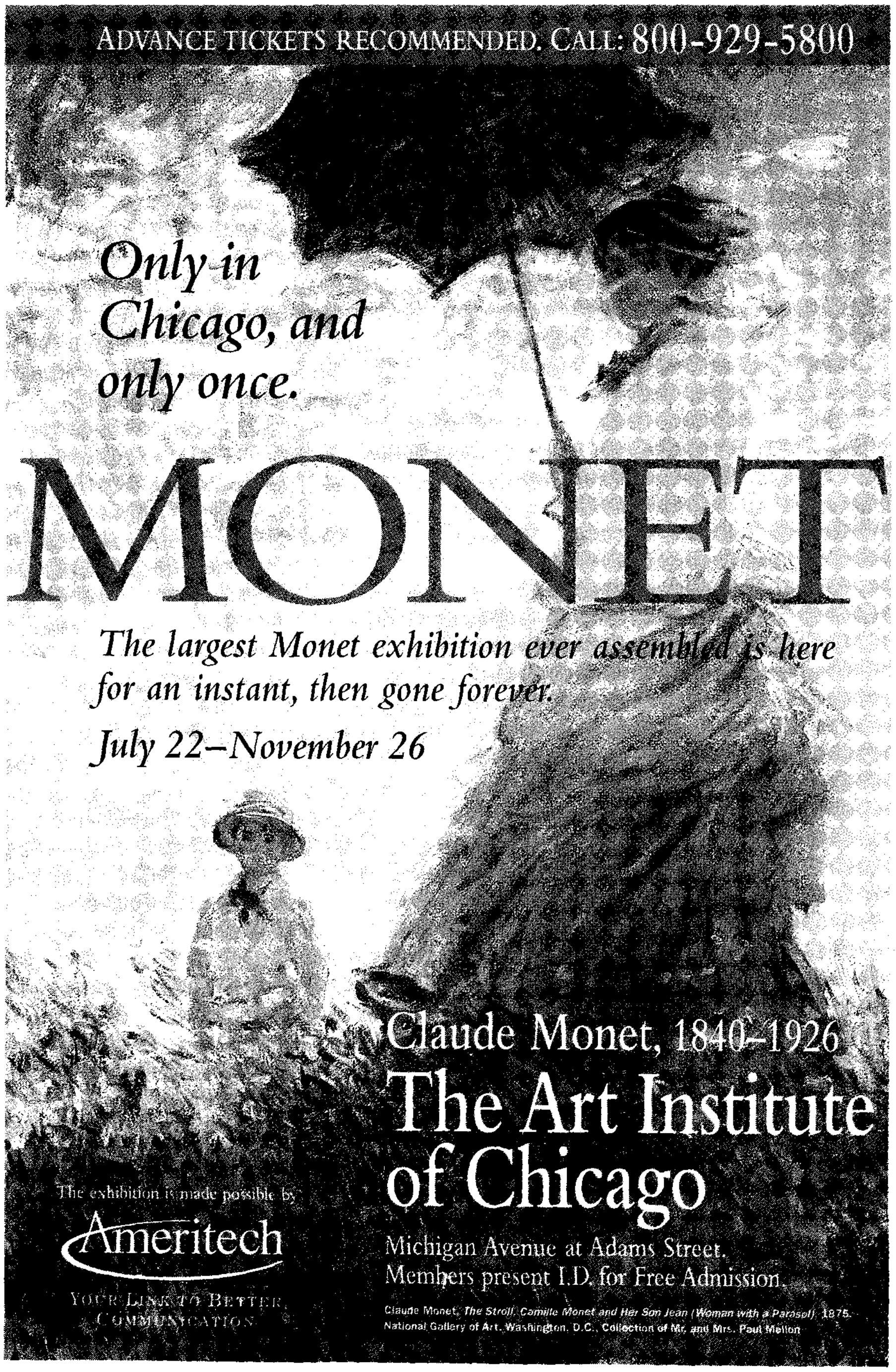
Nell's, 246 W. 14th St. (675-1567)—A Victorian-style club, home to an eclectic crowd of downtown youngsters dancing to throbbing funk and techno-pop.

Paddy Reilly's Music Bar, 519 Second Ave., at 29th St. (686-1210)—**Black 47** plays on Saturdays, and Speir Mor (Gaelic for Big Sky) performs for a hearty following on Fridays. Séisiún—a traditional Irish jam—is on Thursday nights.

Les Poulets, 16 W. 22nd St. (229-2000)—The name may be French, but the music here is Latin: expect salsa, merengue, and, now and then, a cha-cha. Dining.

Rodeo Bar, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—The walls simulate a log cabin, a buffalo head blows smoke through its nostrils, a horse trailer has been converted into a bar, and you get peanuts for eating and, sometimes, throwing. Sundays belong to the **Flying Neutrinos.**

Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (247-0200)—Ballroom dancing on Thursdays and Sundays. The rest of the week it's another dark, sweaty rock club, with flannel-clad stage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divers and the occasional whirling mosh pit. The **GIN BLOSSOMS** make the scene on July 26.

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to the music of distant shores. Senegalese star **KINÉ LAM** finishes up a two-night stand on July 26. July 31: Salsa diva **OLGA TAÑON,** one of Puerto Rico's biggest stars. Dining.

TRAMPS, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—July 30: **FACE TO FACE.** July 31: Up-and-coming rap star **XAVIER.** Aug. 1: The **HATTERS** and **POPA CHUBBY.**

WEBSTER HALL, 125 E. 11th St. (353-1600)—A byzantine disco wonderland with four floors, a coffee shop, and a wig boutique. Wednesday is drag night. Psychedelic Thursdays feature grunge acts and cheap beer.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (662-8830)—July 29: Singer-songwriter Lisa Brigantino strums through her Brooklyn-inspired folk music. With Tomi Millioto.

WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—The **SKADANKS** light up this vast environmentally friendly club on July 28.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Vocalist **PHILLIP OFFICER** is currently at work in the woody nook known as the Oak Room. Dining.

ARTHUR'S TAVERN, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy and Johnny Parker, Fridays and Saturdays to the Freddy Francis trio, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—An airy two-tiered space with pastel walls and potted greenery. July 27-28: Tana Reid. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, and a gift shop. **CHUCK MANGIONE** lives it up through July 30. **IVAN LINS** takes over on Aug. 1. Lins is enormously popular in his native Brazil, but his failure to cross over onto the American charts is something of a blessing for fans of his hip, intelligent songwriting. His most recent record, "Awa Yio," was a feast of jazzy grooves and velvety Portuguese crooning. Dining.

CAJUN, 129 Eighth Ave., at 16th St. (691-6174)—A New Orleans-style restaurant specializing in Dixieland and swing. On Fridays, catch the Canal Street Dixieland Jazz and Blues band. Saturdays belong to the New Atlantic Jazz band.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—Pianist **PETER MINTUN** is in charge at the Bemelmans Bar. A genuine throwback to a gentler time, this elegant performer specializes in curios from the twenties and thirties like "Kitten on the Keys," but he has also been known to play cartoon theme songs if the mood (or the crowd) warrants it. Agreeable and reassuring without being over-gracious, he's sort of a curio himself.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—Through July 30: guitarist **CHARLIE BYRD.** Singer **JIMMY WITHERSPOON** swings by with a trio on Aug. 1. Dining.

FIFTY SEVEN FIFTY SEVEN, 57 E. 57th St. (758-5757)—A cool, sumptuous piano-and-bass room in the Four Seasons Hotel, with twenty-two-foot-high ceilings, a long backlit bar stocked with single-malt Scotch, and fine jazz seven nights a week. Wednesdays through Saturdays, **DONALD JOHNSTON** is the featured pianist. Dining.

FIVE SPOT, 4 W. 31st St. (631-0100)—Set in a mammoth turn-of-the-century ballroom, this jazz club is all marble and gilt, with a few modern touches, such as the zebra-patterned carpet in the V.I.P. room upstairs. Dining.

IRIDIUM, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Across the street from Lincoln Center, this restaurant and club features a handsome bar upstairs and a surreal performance space downstairs. Through July 29: the **T. S. MONK** sextet. Over the past five years, Thelonious's son, a drummer, has built himself a compact hard-bop unit distinguished by its historically minded repertoire and uncommonly tight execution. Its secret weapon is trumpeter and arranger Don Sickler, a man who studies the bop era the way Harold Bloom dissects the canon.

TABLES FOR TWO
Dining around town

NOBU, 105 Hudson St. (219-0500)—Unlike its Tribeca neighbors Bouley and Chanterelle, where you feel obligated to gaze worshipfully upon each morsel, Nobu is clattery and bright—the jolliest of Manhattan's big-ticket restaurants. Some of the noise is the patrons' yakking (pent-up excitement after the struggle for reservations?), and some of it comes from the gang of sushi chefs, who look up from their handiwork now and again and holler greetings. If you order well, you'll be inclined to holler, too—many of Nobu Matsuhisa's California-Japanese creations are so good (and the portions so tiny) that you have separation anxiety the instant you're done. Nobu's famous squid "pasta," which he débuted at his Beverly Hills branch, is actually a little ordinary, but the great stuff is great: the "new-style" sashimi (raw fish seared for a nanosecond); the sushi tartare (yellowtail one night, fatty tuna another), drenched in a wasabi sauce, topped with a blob of smoky caviar, and served in a tiny iced bowl; the cool seaweed hand rolls of rice and crispy hot tempura; the salmon-skin salad, which is simply a mound of mesclun studded with oily chunks of grilled skin.

As good as it is, though, Nobu can be confusing. The menu is big and mystifying—are you supposed to order an actual entrée or lots of appetizers or *what?* (The best strategy is to ask for the chef's tasting dinner and let him worry about it.) The prices are high, but the ambience is neighborhood-joint informal—so is it a special-occasion place, or should you just take out a second mortgage and become a regular? You eat and eat and eat and eat but never quite know when to stop. As someone was heard complaining recently, "I've been stuffing myself for hours, but I can't tell if I'm really hungry or really full." (Open weekdays for lunch and dinner, Saturdays for dinner only. Entrées $14-$30.)

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, and a piano. July 26-29: Piano and bass with **LEE MUSIKER** and **JAY LEONHART.** Dining.

KNITTING FACTORY, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—July 30: The **CLUB FOOT ORCHESTRA** performs a live accompaniment to Buster Keaton's "Sherlock Jr." July 31-Aug. 1: **CECIL TAYLOR'S PHTHONGOS.** For a long time, no one paid much attention to Taylor. He was a freak who played the way that Bartók or Hindemith would have played had they been jazz musicians. But masters often need apostles to prepare their way, and that is what the pianists McCoy Tyner and Keith Jarrett have been doing—knowingly or not—for the past few decades. Once in a while Taylor opens up enough to reveal his roots, and you can hear traces of Ellington, Gershwin, and Monk.

LE MADELEINE, 403 W. 43rd St. (246-2993)—Every Sunday evening, guitar great **GENE BERTONCINI** lights up this cozy Hell's Kitchen bistro with his simmering melodicism and chordal grace.

METROPOLIS, 31 Union Sq. W. (675-2300)—The basement of this swank café is now hosting a series of high-profile gigs. Tuesdays are given over to the **GEORGE GEE ORCHESTRA,** a seventeen-piece swing band.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—A plush, old-fashioned night club, sixty-five floors above it all, complete with Art Deco fixtures, intimate glitter, and a panoramic view as dizzying as the tab. **RICHIE HAVENS** continues through July 29. **NELL CARTER** takes over on Aug. 1. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Sean Mahony and Claudette Sierra. Closed Mondays.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—Thursdays belong to Stan Rubin's big band, Fridays to Lew Anderson's big band and the Kit McClure sextet, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and his Stompers.

SMALLS, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—A new contender in New York's ever-changing jazz topography, this aptly named club features up-and-coming players jamming late into the night.

TAVERN ON THE GREEN, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—This legendary tourist haven makes serious jazz fans welcome in the Chestnut Room, which resembles a hunting lodge and is every bit as over-the-top as the rest of the establishment. **DAVE MC KENNA** settles in for a week on Aug. 1. A one-man piano army, McKenna doesn't need another body on stage, but for this occasion he's joined by two: guitarist Gray Sargent and vocalist Donna Bryne. Don't worry about there being too many notes, though—McKenna is also a terrific accompanist.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The world's most famous jazz club is also the last place in town that still looks, smells, and feels like a classic jazz club—subterranean, smoky, and thick with the spirits of past masters. Through July 30: the **GEORGE COLEMAN** quintet. Coleman is a marvel; there isn't a sax player who knows his instrument better, or one who imparts so much knowledge in every marathon solo. Trombonist **SLIDE HAMPTON** rolls in on Aug. 1. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

VISIONES, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—A tiny, low-key supper club where the jazz, like the Spanish-American cuisine, can take on a spicy, multicultural flavor. **BILL GOODWIN** (in with a trio on July 27) has been a team player for so long (he's performed with Phil Woods for three decades) that his exemplary swing and pinpoint control can get overlooked. Not any more. July 28-29: The Johnny King quartet.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—Through July 29: **JOHN BUNCH** and **PHIL FLANAGAN.** Sleek and adroit, veteran pianist Bunch and bassist Flanagan aren't in the business of ruffling feathers. What they do provide is silky swing and no-nonsense, old-school improvising. Dining.

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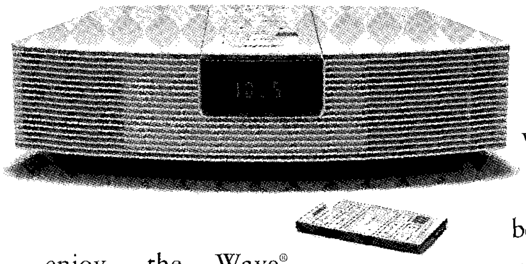

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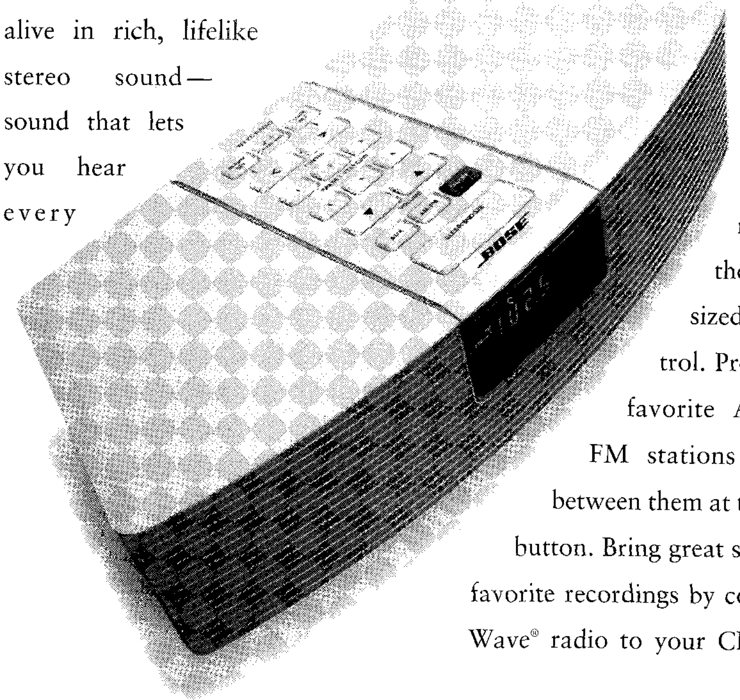

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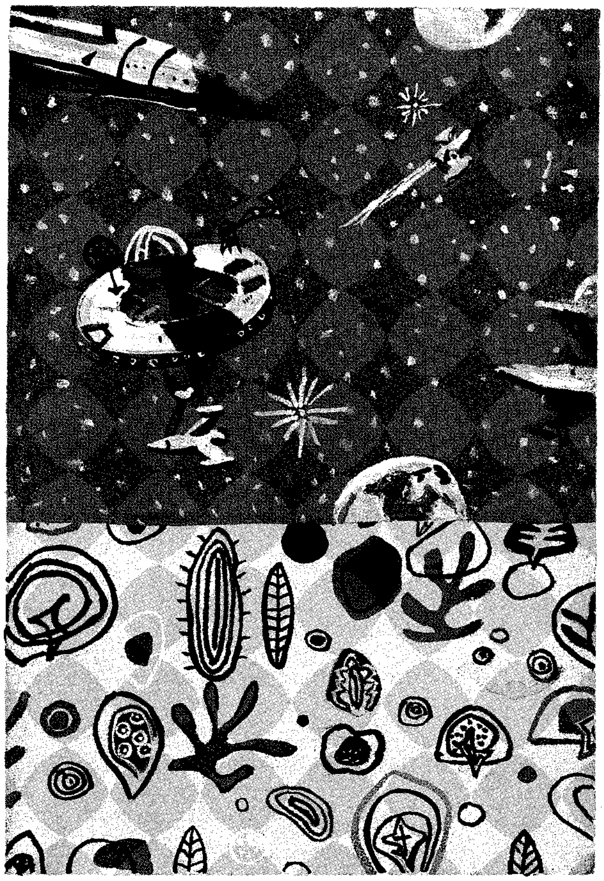
ART

American Tack-ometer

In the years after the Second World War, when the introduction of cheap, easy-to-use latex paint sent the American wallpaper industry into a slump, the industry struck back with a powerful weapon: tackiness on a Homeric scale. "Kitsch to Corbusier: Wallpapers from the 1950s," an exhibition on view at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum (Fifth Avenue at 91st Street; through August 20), takes an incisive look at those halcyon days before beige walls, gray carpets, and track lighting took over.

In the fifties, there was something for everyone: spaceships for the boys' room, French poodles strolling beside the Eiffel Tower for Mom's bath. When designers aimed for taste, the results could be gruesome: witness the woodland motifs of the Scandinavian school, which now look more Strindbergian than sylvan. Miró and Matisse, among other artists, got commissions from the firm of Katzenbach and Warren and proved that while great art may sometimes resemble wallpaper, the reverse does not hold true.

The best of these exuberant wall coverings exhibit an eccentric beauty far removed from the slickness that rules the market now. The white-bread fantasia they created has become as deeply entrenched in the American collective unconscious as "Poor Richard's Almanac" and Mt. Rushmore, and even the silliest have something to say to us.



Wallpaper from the fifties, at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Art and Empire: Treasures from Assyria in the British Museum." Through Aug. 13. . . . ¶ "Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age." Fifty works by the preëminent nineteenth-century cabinetmaking and decorating firm; in conjunction with "Decorating the American Home, 1850-1900," which includes furnishings, pattern books, and catalogues. Both shows through July 30. . . . ¶ The fifty-three paintings, drawings, and watercolors that make up the Annenberg collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist masterworks are on view. . . . ¶ More than a hundred painted-glass roundels produced in the European Lowlands between 1480 and 1560. Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ "The Seven Deadly Sins," a suite of paintings by Paul Cadmus, is at the center of a small show of his works (another of which is "The Eighth Sin: Jealousy"). Through Aug. 13. . . . ¶ "An Egyptian Bestiary," a large non-petting zoo of falcons, baboons, hippos, and ibis, in stone, ivory, gold, bronze, and wood. . . . **note:** The museum's roof garden is open, when weather permits. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—The design exhibitions here are always fun, and "Mutant Materials," a handsomely mounted exploration of the way recent technology has transformed industrial design, is one of the best. In what other museum could you find an orange fake-fur light-switch cover, Nike sneakers, and a baseball glove on display? It's impossible, though, to imagine some of these things in anybody's house. Particularly loathsome is a "seaweed" chair, formed from shreds of fabric in clashing primary colors stiffened with resin and tossed together like a poisonous pasta salad. Many objects, such as a squishy pen that molds to the shape of the user's fingertips, are displayed on a shelf, where the visitor is invited to palpate them. Through Aug. 27. . . . ¶ "Video Spaces: Eight Installations" isn't the kind of show you have to sit on a hard folding chair to watch; rather, it presents some widely divergent sculptural uses of the medium. The best piece is by Tony Oursler: a tiny, limp doll with the face of a screaming woman projected onto its head. Gary Hill has contributed a strange and wonderful self-portrait, titled "Inasmuch As It Is Always Already Taking Place," which consists of sixteen monitors (one is less than an inch square) on which different parts of his body are displayed. Though some of the rooms are full of hot air, this is a challenging and sometimes rewarding exhibition. Through Sept. 12. . . . ¶ "Masterworks from the Louise Reinhardt Smith Collection," thirty-six paintings, drawings, and sculptures by, among others, Kandinsky, Picasso, Monet, Seurat, Braque, Degas, and Moore. Through Aug. 22. . . . ¶ Leon Levinstein's street photographs of people in New York neighborhoods during the fifties, sixties, and seventies. Through Oct. 12. . . . ¶ "Artist's Choice: Elizabeth Murray." A large show of paintings, sculptures, drawings, and prints by seventy women, including Frida Kahlo, Agnes Martin, Louise Bourgeois, Georgia O'Keeffe, Joan Mitchell, and Eva Hesse. Through Aug. 22. . . . ¶ Ten black-and-white photographs by Gilles Peress document the massacres and the refugee camps in Rwanda and Zaire. Through Aug. 1. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A large survey of paintings by the German Neo-Expressionist Georg Baselitz. Through Sept. 17. . . . ¶ "Josef Albers: Glass, Color, and Light," a show of paintings on glass, glass constructions, oil paintings, and rarely exhibited photographs. Through Sept. 17. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway—A survey of Gary Hill's œuvre, in which room after darkened room offers video works of technical finesse and strange, even ravishing beauty. In "Searchlight," for example, a motorized cylinder, which beams an image of an ocean horizon onto the opposite wall, slowly moves from side to side; as the projector approaches the limit of its range, the circular image stretches into a ghostly ellipse, with the sound of waves providing a mournful counterpoint. Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ Twenty-five paintings, sculptures, photographs, and installations are on view in "Antipodean Currents: Ten Contemporary Artists from Australia." Through Aug. 6. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"Edward Hopper and the American Imagination," a selection of sixty-five paintings intended to explore his sensibility rather than illustrate his themes or artistic development. Works are hung in groups accompanied by passages from writers that Hopper admired, including Emerson, Frost, and E. B. White. Through Oct. 15. . . . ¶ In the new series "Views from Abroad: European Perspectives on American Art," guest curators from European institutions organize shows using works from the Whitney's collection and from their own museums' holdings. The first installment is curated by Rudi Fuchs, the director of the Stedelijk Museum, in Amsterdam. Through Oct. 1. . . . ¶ "Florine Stettheimer: Manhattan Fantastica," eighty-five paintings, photographs, theatre designs, and costumed dolls. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Guess who's back? Some one hundred saurischian and ornithischian dinosaurs. That means a cleaned and repositioned Tyrannosaurus rex, an apatosaurus with a new skull and neck bones, and many other specimens, eighty-five per cent of which are real fossils (as opposed to casts). (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—A retrospective of the career of Diane Itter (1946-89), a fibre artist who worked in miniature, using only fine linen thread and a knotting process. Through Oct. 1. . . . ¶ "Marriage in Form," a display of Kay Sekimachi's layered weavings and paper designs and Bob Stocksdale's turned wood bowls. Through Oct. 1. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—Manchu invasions and imperial infighting in the mid-seventeenth century forced potters in the major cites of southern China to search out new patrons. Luckily, the scholar-gentry and merchant classes of the region were wealthy enough and eager enough to step in. "Chinese Porcelains of the Seventeenth Century: Landscapes, Scholars' Motifs, and Narratives" illustrates the resulting shift in style and design, with sixty vases, brush pots, jars, and bowls. Through Aug. 5. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Tuesday evenings until 8; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"Kitsch to Corbusier: Wallpapers from the 1950s." Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ A display of jewelry and accessories from the museum's collection, including Egyptian mummy beads and gold snuffboxes. Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ "The Structure of Style: Dutch Modernism in the Applied Arts 1880-1930." Through Aug. 20. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"Auld Acquaintances: Famous Music from the James Fuld Collection." More than two hundred items, including first editions of Bach's "Goldberg" Variations and Beethoven's "Moonlight" Sonata. Through Aug. 27. . . . ¶ "Animals as Symbol in Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts." Through Sept. 3. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Museo del Barrio, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Reaffirming Spirituality," the third exhibition in the series "Artists Talk Back: Visual Conversations with El Museo." In every installment, participating artists have each chosen a work from the permanent collection to display alongside one of their own. Among the current thirty-four are Cándida Alvarez, Carlos Gutiérrez Solana, and Jaime Davidovich. Through Aug. 13. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 5; Thursdays, noon to 7.)

Museum for African Art, 593 Broadway—Antelope, leopards, hyenas, snakes, chameleons, buffalo, pangolins, and warthogs—they can all be seen in "Animals in African Art: From the Familiar to the Marvelous." (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5:30; Saturdays, noon to 8; Sundays, noon to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Group Shows—At **DE NAGY,** 41 W. 57th St.: Paintings by gallery artists who work from nature in various degrees of representation, including John Bowman, Susanna Heller, Duncan Hannah, Gretna Campbell, and Fairfield Porter. Through July 28. . . . **LITTLEJOHN,** 41 E. 57th St.: Sculptures and paintings by Carl Andre, René Pierre Allain, Sol LeWitt, Mary Obering, John Zinsser, Nancy Haynes, and others, in an exhibition organized by Julian Pretto just before his death, in May. Through July 28. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **WASHBURN,** 20 W. 57th St.: Land- and seascape paintings and drawings by Myron Stout, Alfred Leslie, Milton Resnick, Bill Jensen, James Brooks, and Pegan Brooke. Through July 28. (Closed Mondays.)

Short List—**RAY JOHNSON,** Feigen, 49 E. 68th St. Through Aug. 18. . . . **HANS RICHTER** and **JAMES DAUGHERTY,** Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. Through July 28. . . . **DAVID ROW,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. Through July 28. . . . **DAN WITZ,** St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Open daily, 9 to 7; through Sept. 5.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Leigh Bowery (1961-94)—A marvellous tribute to the late fashion designer, performance artist, and club creature. The show includes numerous photographs of him in his hair-raisingly bizarre getups; two of the outfits are also on display. Bowery was Lucian Freud's favorite model, and there are portraits by that painter, as well as photos of Bowery posing in his studio. But a video monitor compels the most attention: Bowery reinvented the sick joke as a kind of rococo art form—for example, the performance in which he appeared to give birth (complete with afterbirth) to Nicola Bateman. Through 28. (Bonakdar, 130 Prince St. Closed Mondays.)

R. Crumb—An eclectic exhibition of drawings by the great underground cartoonist, spanning his career from early caricatures (W. C. Fields and the Marx Brothers, both important influences) to more recent autobiographical work. The show includes the watercolor of the gangly kid who replaced Eustace Tilley on the cover of the 1994 anniversary issue of this magazine, but for fans of a certain age, the highlight may be an original mechanical for the cover of a 1971 *Mr. Natural* comic book. Through July 29. (Cutler, 379 West Broadway. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

Philip Guston (1913-80)—"Philip Guston's Poem-Pictures," a show that focusses on one aspect of the artist's late style: his collaborations with poets, including Bill Berkson, Stanley Kunitz, and Clark Coolidge. Some of the loveliest pieces feature poems by the artist's wife, Musa McKim. Through July 28. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. Closed Mondays, open Saturdays; open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

Barry Le Va—Round pegs and square holes in handsome cast stone, from a past master of the geometric enigma. He's treading familiar ground, but he does it superbly. Through July 28. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

Glenn Ligon—More cool, tasteful rage from a leading political artist; now he has taken on boxing. The sport provides a brutal escape for young black men, he suggests, and the eight punching bags here serve as a neat metaphor for society's treatment of them. It's a little *too* neat, though, and the texts, by Muhammad Ali and Leon Spinks, are opaque. Through Aug. 25. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

"Cornered"—Corners tend to collect stuff, and at Paula Cooper they've collected art, most of it in a minimal or a conceptual vein. Some of the work is so discreet as to be virtually invisible—for example, Karin Sanders' "Cube," which consists simply of latex paint applied to a couple of corners. Altogether more assertive is Roni Horn's "Kafka's Complaints, Complete," a pile of aluminum beams bearing texts that refer to things the writer didn't like—children, music, heavy furniture. Through July 28. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

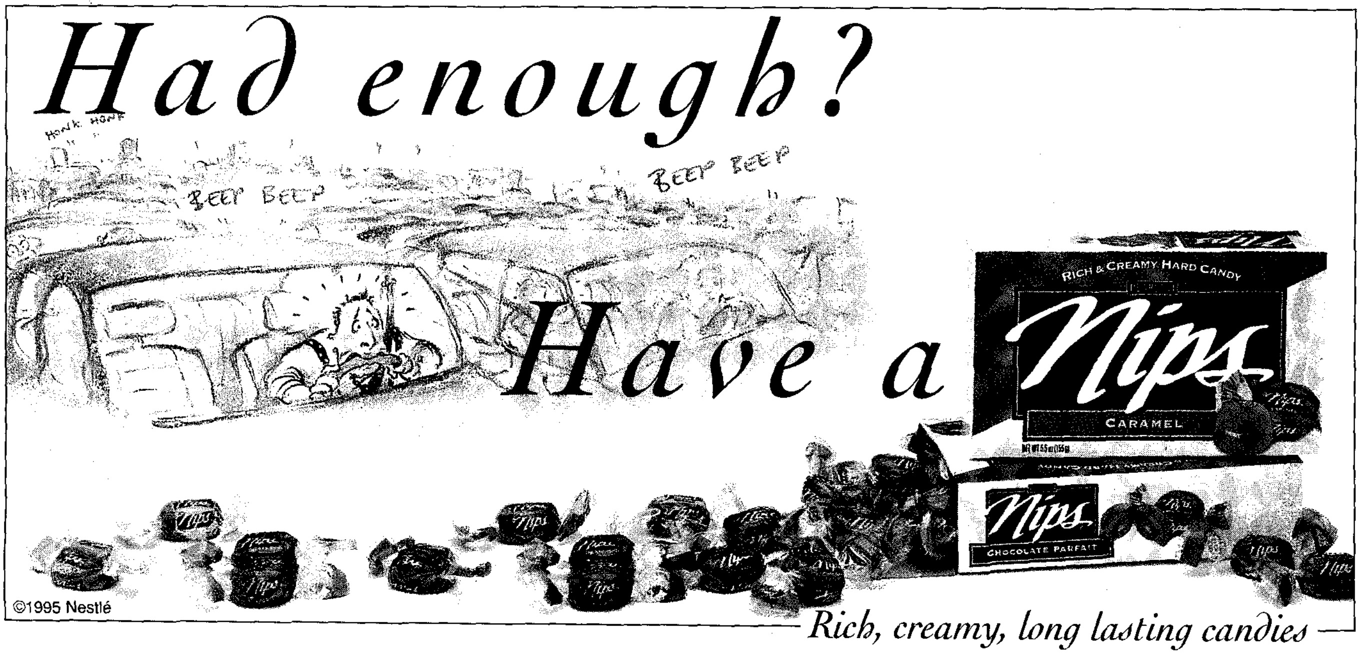
Group Show—A gallery inaugurates its new space with a satisfying, resonant selection that includes paintings (mostly late) by Joan Mitchell and a 1970 suite of marine lithographs by Willem de Kooning. In an untitled painting by Mitchell, from the same year, a massive, fleshy blue cube tilts into a magical white no man's land. There's also a cool biomorphic sculpture in brown walnut, by Raoul Hague. Through Aug. 4. (Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

Short List—**ALEXANDER CALDER,** A/D, 560 Broadway. Through July 28. . . . **YURI DYSHLENKO,** Kind, 136 Greene St. Closed Mondays; through July 28. . . . **PETER HALLEY** and **ETTORE SOTTSASS,** Gorney, 100 Greene St. Closed Mondays; through July 28. . . . **SUE REES AND JONATHAN BEPLER,** Thread Waxing Space, 476 Broadway. Through July 28. . . . **YUKINORI YANAGI,** Blum, 99 Wooster St. Through July 29.

OTHER VENUES

Socrates Sculpture Park—"Pop-up," new works with Pop influences, including Michael Tong's giant Buddha head, made from rusting steel plates, and Karin Giusti's hundred-and-fifty-foot strand of giant "pearls," complete with hydraulic oyster. Also on view are pieces by Gunilla Bandolin, Alberto Riaño, Barbara Grygutis, and Nancy Rubins. Through Sept. 17. (Broadway at Vernon Blvd., Long Island City. Open daily, 10 to sunset.)

Sculpture Center at Roosevelt Island—A mostly outdoor installation of works by six artists. Heather Nicol's "Pick Me," a collection of altered and illuminated prom gowns hanging from the ceiling of an atrium, is a coup de théâtre. Through Nov. 15. (North end of Main St. For information, call 832-4540.)



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PHOTOGRAPHY

John Brill—Small, delicately toned grisailles of ghostly heads and bodies. Through July 28. (Kent, 67 Prince St.)

Charles Harbutt—Many spirited and humorous pictures taken in the sixties and seventies, during the photographer's tenure at Magnum, along with more recent work. Through Aug. 11. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. Closed Mondays.)

Peter Keetman—Design photography from the fifties through the eighties, by one of the founders of the German group Fotoform. In the close-cropped details of 1953 VW Beetle fenders and the precisely composed images of a cable car and several building sites, the subjects' "social" qualities, which Fotoform artists renounced, are not so much excised as refracted in new, unexpected ways. Surprisingly strong are Keetman's subtle studies of landscapes and natural phenomena (particularly snow). Through July 29. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

Karen Kuehn—Most of the pictures here (taken on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques) were made with a pinhole camera, and the desired dreamscape effect is generally successful. The most evocative work, however, was done with a toy camera: a man and three horses emerge, like the lady of the lake, from a rippling, black expanse of water. Through July 28. (Beitzel, 102 Prince St.)

" 'Dance Ink': Frame by Frame"—Photographs commissioned for the elegantly choreographed dance quarterly, by Josef Astor, Sylvia Plachy, Andrew Eccles, Duane Michals, Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, William Wegman, and others. Through Aug. 31. (Furman Gallery, adjacent to the Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center. Open daily, 1:30 to 9.)

"H_2O"—Vintage and contemporary photographs of water, including works by Harry Callahan, Minor White, Diane Cook, Andrew Moore, Len Jenshel, Stuart Klipper, and Flip Schulke. Through Aug. 11. (Richardson, 560 Broadway.)

"Large Bodies"—Large-scale photographs of various parts of the body, by, among others, Cindy Sherman, John Coplans, Chuck Close, Andres Serrano, and Bill Jacobson. Through Sept. 1. (Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St.)

"On Holiday"—Many delightful views of swimmers, sunbathers, operagoers, picnickers, and baseball players, by Max Dupain, J. H. Lartigue, Danielle Weil, John Loengard, Louise Dahl-Wolfe, and others. Through Sept. 2. (Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

"Under 8 x 10 Inches"—Small prints by more than thirty artists, including George Tice, Evelyn Hofer, Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Alfred Stieglitz, Paul Caponigro, André Kertész, and Jill Seymour. Through Sept. 1. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St.—"An American Century of Photography: From Dry-Plate to Digital—The Hallmark Photographic Collection." Two hundred works by both well-known photographers (including Stieglitz, Weston, Strand, and Steiner) and less familiar ones. Through Sept. 10. . . . ¶ "Eyes on an Era," pictures from the thirties through the sixties by photojournalist Irving Haberman. Through Sept. 10. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Short List—**john batho**, Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through Aug. 31. . . . **jiří david**, Tilton, 49 Greene St. Through July 28. . . . **andrew and stuart douglas**, Gallery 292, 120 Wooster St. Closed Mondays, open Saturdays; through July 29. . . . **jo ann verburg**, Mann, 42 E. 76th St. Through Aug. 18. . . . **brett weston**, Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. Closed Mondays, open Saturdays; through July 29.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art.)

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CLASSICAL MUSIC

One, Two, Three

When Mozart was born, in 1756, the piano was still a curiosity in many quarters; by the time he died, thirty-five years later, Europe was well along the road to pianomania, thanks in no small part to him. On July 27, at Avery Fisher Hall, Mostly Mozart will host an evening of the composer's concertos for the instrument. Ingrid Haebler, a Viennese pianist noted for her poise, understated warmth, and scarcity on American stages, will play a concerto of Mozart's maturity, the G-Major (K. 453). (Mozart taught his pet starling to chirp the finale's opening theme, though the bird consistently got two notes wrong.) Mozart began playing duets with his sister, Nannerl, when they were mere tykes. Sometime between 1775 and 1777, they introduced his Two-Piano Concerto (K. 365), which will be played at Lincoln Center by another accomplished pair of siblings, the Turkish twin sisters Süher and Güher Pekinel. Mozart's F-Major Concerto (K. 242) exists in a two-piano version and a more grandiose three-piano rendering; the latter is more commonly heard today, and at Mostly Mozart it will be performed by the refined wife-and-husband team of Valentina Lisitsa and Alexei Kuznetsoff, assisted by Alexander Korsantiya, whose coarser style—not to all tastes—probably won't intrude much, since he'll be playing the simple third-piano part.

IN TOWN

New York Philharmonic—In free outdoor concerts. Gisèle Ben-Dor conducts Bernstein's "Three Dance Episodes from 'On the Town,'" Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 4, de Falla's "The Three-Cornered Hat" Suite No. 2, and Richard Strauss's "Rosenkavalier" Suite. (*July 26* at 8. Prospect Park, Brooklyn. . . . ¶ July 29 at 8. Heckscher State Park, Suffolk County, Long Island. . . . ¶ July 30 at 8. Cunningham Park, Queens.) . . . ¶ Bobby McFerrin may have won ten Grammy awards for his achievements in jazz-inflected pop and pop-inflected jazz, but classical music has been in his ears, too, right from the git-go. Both of his parents are classical musicians—his father even sang at the Met—and McFerrin studied at Juilliard as a child. In 1989, he started seeking out podium pointers from eminent conductors, and in the years since has scored notable successes as a guest conductor. In this performance, McFerrin will offer some of his signature vocal improvisations and will bring his ebullient conducting style to bear on such light classics as Johann Strauss, Jr.,'s "Die Fledermaus" Overture, Fauré's Pavane (Op. 50), Bizet's "L'Arlésienne" Suite No. 1, Dukas's "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," and Gershwin's "An American in Paris." (Great Lawn, Central Park. July 31 at 8. . . . **note:** Fireworks follow each performance. For rain-date and other information about Philharmonic park concerts, call 875-5709.)

Mostly Mozart—*July 26:* Gerard Schwarz conducts the Mostly Mozart Orchestra in a suite from Handel's "Water Music," Kreisler's "Violin Concerto in the Style of Vivaldi" (featuring Gil Shaham), and Mozart's Symphony No. 39 and B-Flat-Major

Piano Concerto (K. 595, with Alicia de Larrocha). . . . **NOTE:** At 7, the St. Petersburg String Quartet will play quartets by Haydn and Shostakovich in a pre-concert recital, open to ticket holders. . . . ¶ July 27: Mr. Schwarz leads the orchestra in a program of keyboard concertos by Mozart: the G-Major Concerto (K. 453), with Ingrid Haebler; the Concerto in E-Flat Major for Two Pianos (K. 365), featuring Güher and Süher Pekinel; and the F-Major Concerto for Three Pianos (K. 242), with Valentina Lisitsa, Alexei Kuznetsoff, and Alexander Korsantiya. . . . **NOTE:** At 7, Ms. Lisitsa and Mr. Kuznetsoff will play Rachmaninoff's Suite No. 1 and Liszt's "Reminiscences of Mozart's 'Don Giovanni.' " . . . ¶ July 28-29: Soprano Jane Eaglen is spotlighted in Beethoven's concert scena "Ah, perfido!" and in an excerpt from Simon Mayr's "Medea in Corinto"; Richard Stoltzman is the soloist in Mozart's Clarinet Concerto; and Mr. Schwarz and the orchestra perform Mozart's Symphony No. 38 (the "Prague"). . . . **NOTE:** Pre-concert recitals will feature pianist Frederic Chiu, on July 28 at 7, and mezzo-soprano Laura Tucker, on July 29 at 7. . . . ¶ July 31: The Emerson String Quartet performs Mozart's C-Minor Adagio and Fugue (K. 546), as well as quartets by Haydn (in B Minor, Op. 33, No. 1) and Beethoven (in F Minor, Op. 95); Yefim Bronfman rounds out the ensemble for Brahms's Piano Quintet. . . . **NOTE:** In a pre-concert recital, at 7, the Emerson foursome plays Beethoven's C-Minor Quartet (Op. 18, No. 4). . . . ¶ Aug. 1-2: Itzhak Perlman joins Mr. Schwarz and the orchestra for a performance of Mendelssohn's E-Minor Violin Concerto. Also on the program are Mendelssohn's "Hebrides Overture" and Stravinsky's "Pulcinella" (featuring mezzo-soprano Wendy Hoffman, tenor Stanford Olsen, and bass-baritone Jan Opalach). (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Evenings at 8.)

BARGEMUSIC—An informal program of virtuosic violin works, featuring Christiaan Bor; with pianist Judy Gordon. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. July 27 at 7:30 and July 30 at 4.)

MOMA SUMMERGARDEN—Musicians from the Juilliard School perform American compositions from the second half of our century: Robert Hall Lewis's "Inflections I," for double bass (1969); Morton Feldman's "The Viola of My Life, No. 2" (1970); and Jack Beeson's 1953 chamber opera "Hello Out There" (conducted by Summergarden's musical curator, Joel Sachs). (Sculpture Garden, Museum of Modern Art, 14 W. 54th St. July 28-29 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

ALEX HOLTON—Performing Baroque trumpet sonatas by Purcell, Handel, and Carlo Tessarini. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 1-718 885-2478. July 30 at noon.)

IRIS REGEV—Cellist, playing Beethoven's Cello Sonata No. 3, as well as music by her accompanist (and husband), Ilan Rechtman. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. July 30 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.)

OUT OF TOWN

CARAMOOR—July 27 at 4:15: Pianist Rieko Aizawa, in an all-Chopin recital that includes the Second Sonata and the First Ballade. . . . ¶ July 28 at 8:30: Pianist John Browning assists the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble in an all-Brahms program comprising solo-piano works, the Horn Trio, and the Piano Quintet. . . . ¶ July 29 at 8:30: André Previn leads the Orchestra of St. Luke's in Mozart's F-Major Divertimento (K. 138), Brahms's "Variations on a Theme by Haydn," and Beethoven's Symphony No. 6. . . . ¶ July 30 at 5:30: Soprano Barbara Bonney, cellist Yo-Yo Ma, and pianist André Previn join in various combinations to perform songs by Schubert and Mr. Previn, Schubert's "Arpeggione" Sonata, and Franck's all-purpose A-Major Sonata (here transposed for cello). (Katonah, N.Y. 1-914 232-1252.)

GLIMMERGLASS OPERA—July 27 at 8 and July 31 at 2: "Don Giovanni." . . . ¶ July 28 at 8: "The Yeomen of the Guard." . . . ¶ July 29 at 8: Handel's "Tamerlano." . . . ¶ July 30 at 2: Britten's "Paul Bunyan." (Cooperstown, N.Y. 1-607 547-2255.)

TANGLEWOOD—July 27 at 8:30: The King's Singers offer a wide-ranging program that includes motets by Byrd and the première of Daron Hagen's "The Waking Father." . . . ¶ July 28 at 8:30: Seiji Ozawa conducts the Boston Symphony in Beethoven's "Fidelio" Overture, Hindemith's Piano Concerto (with Peter Serkin), and Beethoven's Symphony No. 6. . . . ¶ July 29 at 8:30: Jukka-Pekka Saraste conducts the Boston Symphony in Nielsen's "Maskarade" Overture, Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante in E-Flat Major (K. 364, with violinist Maxim Vengerov and violist Yuri Bashmet), and Sibelius's Symphony No. 1. . . . ¶ July 30 at 2:30: Violinist Itzhak Perlman and pianist Emanuel Ax offer violin sonatas by Beethoven (his Sixth) and Strauss, as well as Dvořák's G-Major Sonatina. . . . ¶ Aug. 1 at 8:30: The annual Tanglewood on Parade festivities, which traditionally conclude with the big bang of Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture." Leon Fleisher, John Williams, Keith Lockhart, and Mr. Ozawa will take turns at the podium. (Lenox, Mass. 1-413 637-1600.)

MAVERICK CONCERTS—The Angeles String Quartet performs quartets by Haydn (in E-Flat Major, Op. 1, No. 2, and in D Minor, Op. 76, No. 2) and Dvořák (in F Major, Op. 96, the "American"); classical guitarist Frederick Hand assists the foursome in a quintet by Boccherini. (Woodstock, N.Y. 1-914 679-8217. July 30 at 3.)

MUSIC MOUNTAIN—Haydn's G-Minor Quartet (Op. 74, No. 3), Shostakovich's Quartet No. 14, and Bloch's Piano Quintet No. 1, performed by the Cavani String Quartet and pianist Peter Takacs. (Falls Village, Conn. July 30 at 3. For information about tickets, call 1-203 824-7126.)

Conti, an elephant with the Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus, and her trainer, Fred Logan.

DAVID HUGHES

ABOVE AND BEYOND

DEBBIE IN CHAINS—When the travelling Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus hit Queens early this month, two Asian elephants broke rank and ran out of the big top during their opening-night act. The next morning, Debbie, the instigator (she whonked Frieda with her trunk), stared out of photos in the New York tabs, in leg irons, with a gash across her mug. "She put a little dent in the manager's car," the chief elephant trainer, Fred (Cap) Logan, said, explaining Debbie's hide wound. "That was it. Nobody got hurt." Debbie and Frieda have been sent away; the seventy-year-old Mr. Logan soldiers on good-naturedly, directing the dance act (the seven remaining elephants high-step to "She's Too Fat for Me") and leading the elephant parade, despite the broken foot he sustained when one runaway pachyderm stomped him. "It'll heal," he said. "I had it broke before." Mr. Logan, like his charges, takes the long view. "Elephants have been running ever since they've been in America. Happened to me once before, thirty-five years ago—from a whistle on a factory. I don't think there's any worry now at all. What's left here is solid elephants." (Midland Beach Park, Staten Island. July 24-27 at 4:30 and 7:30. The circus travels—without elephants—to six Long Island locations from July 28 through Aug. 13. For more information, call 1-718 441-0080 or 1-516 499-0800.)

READINGS—July 26 at 7: Writers Nancy Lemann, Ben Neihart, and Betsy Sussler read from their stories of life in the Crescent City. (KGB, 85 E. 4th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ July 26 at 7: Essayist Dan Barden and novelist Andrew Postman read from their work. (Limbo, 47 Avenue A, at 4th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ July 27 at 8:30: Patti Smith reads her poetry and plays her music. Smith will also introduce Janet Hamill, her literary mentor, who will read poems from "The Temple" and "Nostalgia of the Infinite." (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary.)

TALKS—July 28 at 7: Ang Lee, director of "Eat Drink Man Woman," screens his early film "Fine Line" and discusses "Sense and Sensibility," his first work without Asian actors, a December release starring Emma Thompson and Hugh Grant. (China Institute, 125 E. 65th St. For reservations, call 744-8181, ext. 144.) . . . ¶ July 29 at 1: Professional reptile handler Bruce Shwedick brings out exotic creatures that he, at least, feels comfortable with: a snapping turtle, an albino Indian rock python, a monitor lizard, a Sinaloan milk snake, and a Nile crocodile. (Staten Island Zoo, 614 Broadway, Staten Island. For more information, call 1-718 442-3101.)

TOURS—July 27 at 6:30: Architectural historian Matt Postal leads a tour of SoHo at the hour when shadows on the cast-iron storefronts of the Victorian commercial district are at their starkest. For more information, call New York Walks, at 606-3893. . . . ¶ July 29 at 1: Big Onion Walking Tours visits the site of the 1712 African uprising, the home of the first Irish Colonial governor, and other landmarks of Lower Manhattan's ethnic history. For more information, call 439-1090.

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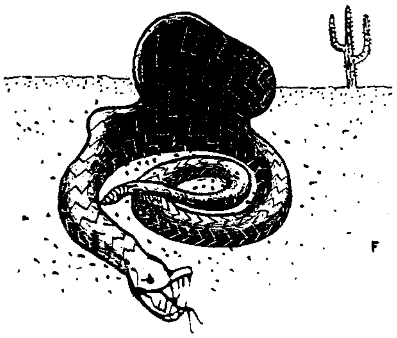


THE MOVIES

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

Country Life—A romantic comedy about sheep farmers and socialites in Australia in the nineteen-twenties, directed by and starring Michael Blakemore, who also wrote the screenplay—which is loosely based on Chekhov's "Uncle Vanya." With Sam Neill, Greta Scacchi, John Hargreaves, and Kerry Fox. Opening July 26. (68th St. Playhouse.)

Double Happiness—A film by Mina Shum. (Reviewed below in Current Films.) Opening July 28. (Quad Cinema.)

Lie Down with Dogs—A gay New Yorker's first summer in Provincetown, Massachusetts, is the subject of an independent feature written and directed by, and also starring, Wally White. Opening July 28. (Village East Cinemas.)

Midnight Dancers—Philippine director Mel Chionglo made this drama about three brothers who work in gay night clubs in Manila. Written by Ricardo Lee. Opening July 28. (Cinema Village.)

The Net—A computer-systems analyst (Sandra Bullock) falls prey to a criminal conspiracy on the Internet, in a thriller directed by Irwin Winkler, from a script by John Brancato and Michael Ferris. Also starring Jeremy Northam, Dennis Miller, Diane Baker, and Ken Howard. Opening July 28. (Village Theatre VII, Murray Hill Cinemas, Gemini, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

Operation Dumbo Drop—The story of five Green Berets (played by Danny Glover, Ray Liotta, Doug E. Doug, Corin Nemec, and Denis Leary) who airlift an eight-thousand-pound elephant into a Vietnamese village in 1968. Directed by Simon Wincer. Written by Gene Quintano and Jim Kouf; based on an article by Jim Morris. Opening July 28. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, Lincoln Square, and Embassy 1.)

She Lives to Ride—Alice Stone's documentary look at women and motorcycles includes archival footage and interviews with, among others, an octogenarian cyclist and the creator of *Harley Woman* magazine. Opening July 28. (Little Theatre.)

Waterworld—Kevin Costner battles a floating band of thieves, led by Dennis Hopper, in this adventure set in a wet, wet future. With Jeanne Tripplehorn and Tina Majorino. Directed by Kevin Reynolds. Opening July 28. (Village Theatre VII, 34th St. East, Coronet, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre addresses and phone numbers are listed on page 24.)

Apollo 13—Ron Howard's movie, like the perilous 1970 lunar mission itself, gets home safely only by the skin of its teeth. Dean Cundey's cinematography is drab, James Horner's score is unbearable, and Howard retards the momentum with frequent cutaways to the astronauts' families, who are, unsurprisingly, mighty worried. But the acting—especially by Tom Hanks, Kevin Bacon, and Bill Paxton (as the astronauts) and Ed Harris (as a NASA flight controller)—is sharp and persuasive. And the screenplay, by William Broyles, Jr., and Al Reinert, makes the scientific details both comprehensible and exciting. In the end, this failed mission seems like the most impressive achievement of the entire space program: a triumph not of planning but of inspired improvisation.—T.R. (7/10/95) (34th Street Showplace, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Regency.)

An Awfully Big Adventure—In Mike Newell's new picture, a teen-ager (Georgina Cates) who goes to work at the Liverpool Playhouse in 1947 falls for a sleazy director (Hugh Grant)—an unfortunate choice, since his hobby is the capture of male hearts. She has better luck with the louche leading man (Alan Rickman), who takes her to bed in his basement. Rickman, missing from the movies for much too long, is easily the best thing about this picture; he looks weary and wolfish as he inches toward a gruesome revelation. Charles Wood's screenplay, adapted from Beryl Bainbridge's 1991 novel, deals in muttered non sequiturs, and the movie is badly dislocated—you feel that it might have once made sense but that someone tore it apart and couldn't glue it back together again. Yet it works as a minor mood piece. There's real texture to it—something dank and reeking—and slowly the story releases a flavor of backstage life that's as strong as stewed tea.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center and Eastside Playhouse.)

Batman Forever—Is that a threat? Val Kilmer, in a bulging, rubbery Batsuit, looks and sounds like an action toy; Joel Schumacher's direction is coarse and slovenly. The picture has the self-conscious jokiness of the "Batman" TV series and the smudged, runny imagery of a cheaply printed comic book. Also with Jim Carrey (as the Riddler), Tommy Lee Jones (as Two-Face), Chris O'Donnell (as Robin), Nicole Kidman, and Michael Gough.—T.R. (7/10/95) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Gemini, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

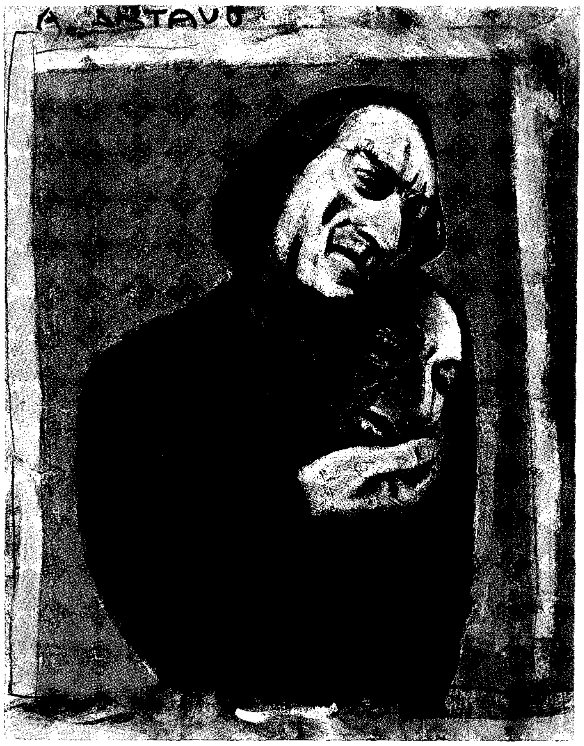
The Bridges of Madison County—Screenwriter Richard LaGravenese and director Clint Eastwood have taken Robert James Waller's best-selling novel and turned out something sombre and restrained—almost, in fact, good (though it's too long). Eastwood also stars, as Kincaid, the strolling photographer who shows up at an Iowa farmhouse and falls for the lonely Francesca (Meryl Streep). The two leads' sly comic rhythm is miles removed from the book's flailing solemnity, though Eastwood has bravely given himself the few ridiculous lines that survived.—A.L. (6/19/95) (Village Theatre VII, Tower East, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Lincoln Square.)

Clueless—A Beverly Hills teen-ager (Alicia Silverstone) plays matchmaker for two teachers (Wallace Shawn and Twink Caplan) and gives a new friend (Brittany Murphy) a makeover, but her own life is a more difficult project. Written and directed by Amy Heckerling. (19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Waverly, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, and Embassy.)

Double Happiness—Jade (Sandra Oh), a self-confident twenty-two-year-old who lives with her parents, wants to be an actress; her over-protective parents, who emigrated from Hong Kong to Canada to give her "opportunities" they never had, want her to marry a nice Chinese boy. The movie is billed as a comedy, but it's much more interesting for the repressive family dynamic it captures. Stephen Chang is excellent as the father, whose unyielding disapproval repeatedly reduces his daughter to quiet submission, until she finally works up the courage to leave. Written and directed by Mina Shum.—S.K. (Quad Cinema; starting July 28.)

First Knight—King Arthur (Sean Connery) is growing old; his intended, Guinevere (Julia Ormond), is looking younger and lustier every day; and the new recruit to the Round Table, Lancelot (Richard Gere), is doing fancy stuff with swords. As if that weren't enough to worry about, wicked Prince Malagant (Ben Cross) is wearing a long dark overcoat covered with iron studs, an infallible sign of trouble. Jerry Zucker's movie is a travesty of Arthurian legend, but so is every Camelot movie. This one is an odd mixture of Tolkien and Indiana Jones, all craggy castles and danger-dodging. But there's a great nocturnal battle, and enough thoughtless rhetoric ("Nobody move or Arthur dies!") to gratify the connoisseur of kitsch. It's hard not to wonder about Ormond, though, besieged by Connery on one side and Gere on the other. Why can't she pick up someone her own age?—A.L. (7/17/95) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Beekman, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, Olympia, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ 34th St. East; through July 27.)

Free Willy 2: The Adventure Home—Jason James Richter reprises his role as the young boy whose best friend is a seven-thousand-pound orca whale. With Michael Madsen and Jayne Atkinson as the boy's foster parents, also reprising their roles. Directed by Dwight Little. Written by Karen Janszen, Corey Blechman, and John Mattson. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)



At the Film Forum, Sami Frey in "My Life and Times with Antonin Artaud."

ANDREA VENTURA

Grosse Fatigue—A comedy written and directed by and starring Michel Blanc. In French. (Quad Cinema.)

The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls in Love—The title characters—two high school seniors, a tomboy outcast (Laurel Hollomon) and a popular girl who has yet to come out (Nicole Parker)—are charming, in a modest, indie-movie sort of way. But this is basically a puppy-love story rewritten for girls: admirably unsensational, earnest, and engaging, in the tradition of an after-school special. Written and directed by Maria Maggenti.—S.K. (Angelika Film Center and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

The Indian in the Cupboard—The fine children's book by Lynne Reid Banks has received a faithful treatment from screenwriter Melissa Mathison. Yet about all that comes through Frank Oz's direction of the story—involving a boy whose magic cupboard brings plastic toys to life—are the lessons in responsibility to others that the tiny Indian (played by the Native American rap singer Litefoot) teaches the boy (Hal Scardino). Their sweet, gawky interplay is winning; and David Keith, as a sensitive miniature cowboy named Boo-hoo Boone, pumps a great deal of energy into the mix. But Mathison's screenplay needed a director who could provide the kind of magic that Steven Spielberg gave her script for "E.T." Oz just tells the story, with little sense of wonder, and relies on Randy Edelman's sappy score to push the audience's buttons.—B.D. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, New York Twin, East 85th Street, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square. . . . ¶ Embassy; through July 27.)

Judge Dredd—In the third millennium, the world will consist of endless tracts of nothingness dotted with megacities—strongholds crammed with violent, hopeless humanity. In 1995, meanwhile, the director Danny Cannon has made a movie that consists of endless tracts of nothingness dotted with minicharacters—strongmen damned to violent, hopeless inanity. In one of the year's more predictable casting decisions, Sylvester Stallone plays Judge Dredd, the lawmaker with the most fearsome reputation and the most ridiculous motorbike. He is worshipped by another judge (Diane Lane) and loathed by his brother (Armand Assante). Considering that the movie was adapted from comic books, the least we should expect is a juicy battle between good and evil, but the conflict is, in fact, a matter of fine distinctions between shades of Fascism. Whenever you sit back and try to enjoy the pop wizardry of the special effects, you catch sight of Dredd's epaulettes and think of Mussolini.—A.L. (Village Theatre VII, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, and 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ Embassy 1; through July 27. . . . ¶ Embassy; starting July 28.)

Kids—Larry Clark's look at New York City teen-agers. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Mighty Morphin Power Rangers: The Movie—A children's-television phenomenon on the scale of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles has become a summer movie for kids, with mixed results. The six color-coded intergalactic teens are martial-arts experts, and their fights with the monster armies of the evil Ivan Ooze (who seeks world domination by eliminating parents, much like the filmmakers) are dazzling and funny. What the film lacks is the punchy editing and pacing needed to excite its intended audience. The director, Bryan Spicer, who did such innovative work on the hip "Parker Lewis Can't Lose" television series, may have made a mistake in dispensing with the cheesy effects of the TV show—he has also lost its playfulness.—B.D. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 23rd St. West Triplex, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, and National Twin.)

My Life and Times with Antonin Artaud—A dramatization of the actor and author's final two years, in Paris in the late nineteen-

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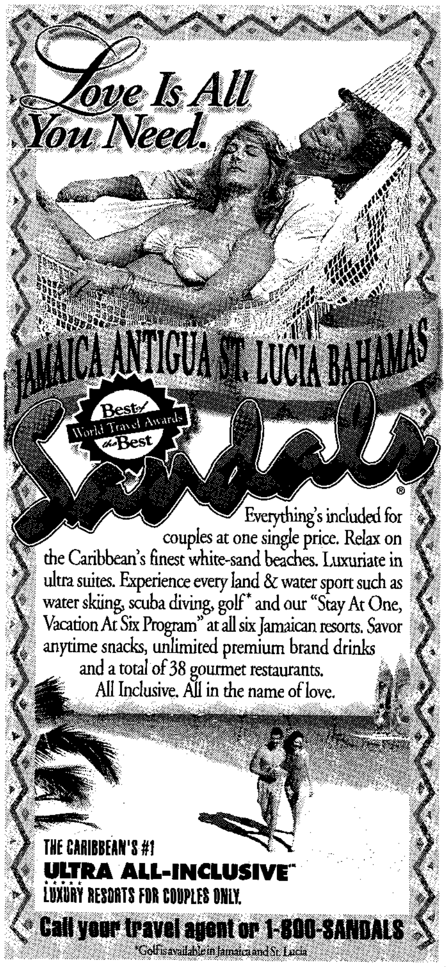

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forties, starring Sami Frey as Artaud. Directed by Gérard Mordillat. In French. (Film Forum; through Aug. 1.)

Nine Months—Samuel (Hugh Grant), a child psychotherapist who, quite understandably, doesn't like children, is aghast when he discovers that his girlfriend (Julianne Moore) is pregnant; they have just enough time to argue, split up, and bond again before the baby is born. Given that the movie was directed by Chris Columbus ("Home Alone," "Mrs. Doubtfire"), it ought to be unwatchable. But it's not that bad. Grant performs a California variation on his stuttering-fluster shtick, inflated into caricature by insistent closeups. The film's energy, such as it is, arises from his patter with other men (an aggressive Tom Arnold, a lazily horny Jeff Goldblum). The women—Moore and Joan Cusack—are little more than magnets for male anxiety. They have the babies, the movie tells us with its sunny, reactionary guile; what more do they want?—A.L. (7/24/95) (Murray Hill Cinemas, Gotham Cinema, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and Criterion Center.)

Pocahontas—Disney may have seen lightning strike for the fifth consecutive time with this animated smash, but it's the weakest of the bunch: a bland, predictably p.c. story so taken up with teaching lessons about tolerance and the environment that it leaves hardly any room for laughter. Pocahontas, with her almond eyes, full lips, and long black hair, parades through the forest like a model on a runway. And Mel Gibson's voice, for John Smith, is so familiar that it's distracting; his handsome face keeps threatening to break through the character's cartoonish good looks. The studio hasn't failed in its intentions—the merchandise will outgross the movie by a wide margin—but there are more entertaining commercials on TV.—B.D. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, Guild, Lincoln Square, and Olympia.)

The Postman—Antonio Skármeta's bittersweet 1985 novel, "Burning Patience," upon which this movie is loosely based, told the story of Mario, a lonely postman who delivers mail to Pablo Neruda in Isla Negra, the desolate corner of Chile where the poet spent his final years. Their friendship grows against a tragic backdrop: Chile (like Neruda) is ailing; by the end, it has succumbed to dictatorship. In Michael Radford's lovely but sanitized version, the action has been moved two decades earlier to picturesque Italy, where a still-dashing Neruda has been temporarily exiled. As Neruda, the great Philippe Noiret somehow conquers being dubbed in Spanish-accented Italian; as Mario, the late Italian comedian Massimo Troisi is painfully affecting. Politically, the film is much weaker: Italy in 1953 is a weird setting for martyrdom. In Italian.—S.K. (Village East Cinemas, Cinema II, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Safe—Carol (Julianne Moore), the heroine of Todd Haynes's peculiar, daring new movie, is a wealthy Southern California housewife stricken with a mysterious disease. The best diagnosis anyone can come up with is "environmental illness"—which means, essentially, that she's allergic to the world she lives in. No matter how sterile her surroundings may seem (and they look as scrubbed and shiny as an operating room) they are, for her, teeming with toxins. The movie is an eerily detached study of biological paranoia. At first, Haynes's manner seems fanatically austere: the heroine's deterioration is rendered in clinical, elegantly alienated long shots. But the movie's rhythm is hypnotic, and when, midway, the action shifts to a New Age desert compound that represents Carol's last hope of restoring her health, the filmmaker's distancing techniques begin to pay off in volatile, eccentric satire. Moore, in a nearly unplayable role, is amazingly vivid and touching; this is a heartbreaking portrait of a woman in full, panicked retreat from life. Also with Xander Berkeley and Peter Friedman.—T.R. (Angelika Film Center.)

Sister My Sister—An English production based on the same lurid nineteen-thirties crime that inspired Jean Genet's "The Maids." (Imagine a high-class literary treatment of a TV movie-of-the-week.) Christine (Joely Richardson), the elder of two French sisters working as servants, is bitter to the point of insanity because sweet, klutzy Lea (Jodhi May), the younger, has always been their mother's pet. As their relationship grows increasingly sexual, they find their tyrannical employer (Julie Walters) more and more suffocating. Tensions build. . . . Written by an American, Wendy Kesselman, based on her play "My Sister in This House"; directed by another American, Nancy Meckler.—S.K. (Cinema Village; through July 27.)

Smoke—Five years ago, the director Wayne Wang asked the novelist Paul Auster to work up one of his stories as a screenplay. The result—a highly cerebral intertwining of the lives of white and black characters in Brooklyn in 1990, centering on a cigar-store owner (Harvey Keitel) and a lonely writer (William Hurt)—is obviously a labor of love. But Wang's sentimentality and Auster's self-consciousness don't go together: the direction is literal, and the lines sound like short-story dialogue read aloud. Only Forest Whitaker, playing a guilty father, comes off well. A gorgeous sequence that runs behind the final credits—with no dialogue, just a song by Tom Waits—suggests what the film *might* have been. With Harold Perrineau, Jr., Stockard Channing, and Ashley Judd.—S.K. (Angelika Film Center, Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Species—In Los Angeles, where no one can hear you scream, a comely young blonde (Natasha Henstridge)—who is, in fact, half human and half extraterrestrial—roams the streets in search of a man to mate with. (Her biological clock runs at warp speed.) Hard on her heels are five alien-hunters (Ben Kingsley, Forest Whitaker, Michael Madsen, Marg Helgenberger, and Alfred Molina), who intend to destroy the Babe from Another Planet before she can have unsafe sex and drop a litter of nasty mutants. Roger Donaldson's film is itself a hybrid: it splices together bits of DNA from vampire stories, the "Alien" series, and the energetic 1987 B picture "The Hidden," and the result is pretty unsightly—it doesn't make sense, it isn't funny, and it isn't scary. In a way, though, that's a blessing. The movie is too dull and too plain to seduce even the most desperate viewer, and there's some comfort in the thought that this pathetic specimen probably won't be spawning any sequels. Screenplay by Dennis Feldman.—T.R. (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza.)

Under Siege 2: Dark Territory—Steven Seagal returns, this time as a passenger on a cross-country train seized by terrorists who plan to blow up the Pentagon. Eric Bogosian is the lead bomber. Directed by Geoff Murphy. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Baronet, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Coronet; through July 27.)

Wild Reeds—A French coming-of-age story, directed by André Téchiné. In French. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Quad Cinema.)

ALSO PLAYING

BANDIT QUEEN: Village East Cinemas. . . . **BELLE DE JOUR:** 19th Street East 6 and Paris. . . . **THE BIG CITY:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **BRAVEHEART** (reviewed in our issue of 6/5/95): Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 59th Street East Cinema, Lincoln Square, and National Twin. . . . **BURNT BY THE SUN** (5/8/95): Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **CONGO:** Manhattan Twin and Embassy. . . . **CRIMSON TIDE** (5/15/95): Village East Cinemas, Gemini, and Lincoln Square. . . . **THE CRUDE OASIS:** Cinema 3rd Avenue. . . . **CRUMB** (5/1/95): Film Forum 3. . . . **DIE HARD WITH A VENGEANCE** (5/29/95): Manhattan Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Criterion Center. . . . **DON JUAN DE MARCO** (4/10/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **THE ENGLISHMAN WHO WENT UP A HILL BUT CAME DOWN A MOUNTAIN** (5/15/95): Village East Cinemas and Cinema 3. . . . **FRENCH KISS** (5/29/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **LITTLE ODESSA:** Plaza and Quad Cinema. . . . **LIVING IN OBLIVION:** Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **LOVE AND HUMAN REMAINS:** Quad Cinema and Carnegie Hall Cinemas. . . . **THE MADNESS OF KING GEORGE** (1/16/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **THE MIDDLEMAN:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **MURIEL'S WEDDING:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **ONCE WERE WARRIORS:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **PARTY GIRL:** Angelika 57. . . . **THE PEREZ FAMILY:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **POSTCARDS FROM AMERICA:** Quad Cinema. . . . **PULP FICTION** (10/10/94): Movieland 8th Street Triplex. . . . **WINGS OF COURAGE** (4/24/95): Lincoln Square.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000).
Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171).
Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th (477-6600).
Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th (982-0400).
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th (924-3363).
Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th (529-6799).
19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th (260-8000).
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th (689-6548).
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th (532-5544).
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th (683-0255).
Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th (755-3020).
Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th (759-1411).
Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th (759-2262).
Plaza, 42 E. 58th (355-3320).
Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th (935-6420).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th (759-4630).
Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th (355-1663).
Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th (753-6022).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd (513-5408).
Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th (832-1670).
Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th (737-2622).
New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th (744-7339).
68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th (734-0302).
Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st (879-1313).
East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th (249-5100).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th (534-1880).
Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th (876-2400).
86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th (249-1144).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110).
Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd (929-8037).
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th (929-3350).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th (255-8800).
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd (513-5402).
23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd (989-0060).
Guild, 33 W. 50th (757-2406).
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St., between 8th and 9th Aves. (504-0960).
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th (765-7600).
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th (265-2520).
Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th (586-1900).
Paris, 4 W. 58th (980-5656).
Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th (752-5959).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd (265-7466).
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd (757-2280).
Regency, B'way at 67th (724-3700).
Lincoln Square, B'way at 68th (336-5000).
84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th (877-3600).
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th (222-1200).
Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th (865-8128).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th (354-0900).
Embassy 1, B'way at 46th (302-0494).
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th (730-7262).
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way (869-8340).
National Twin, B'way at 44th (869-0950).

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

La Cage aux Folles (1978)—A funny, touching fable of monogamy and liberation, with Michel Serrault as the drag queen Albin and Ugo Tognazzi as his longtime mate, the night-club owner Renato, whose son is about to wed a right-wing statesman's daughter. The straighter that Albin tries to play it, the more he bollixes up the whole affair. Serrault is amazing—like Stan Laurel, he's riotous even at his most forlorn. (Albin's body can't quite keep up with the graceful mental picture he has of himself.) As Renato, Tognazzi acts with the stylized hauteur of a headwaiter in his own house. Like the performers, the characters love acting—including the gleefully swish black butler (Benny Luke), who, on the occasion of a formal dinner, trades his usual skimpy outfit (made of heart-shaped doilies) for a tuxedo and sings a garbled version of "Old Man River." Edouard Molinaro directed, from a script by Francis Veber. In French.—M.S. (Walter Reade Theatre; July 31-Aug. 1.)

George Stevens: A Filmmaker's Journey (1985)—George Stevens, Jr., pays eloquent tribute to his father, who in the thirties directed such glories as "Alice Adams" and "Swing Time" and in the fifties and sixties mounted tragedies and epics ranging from his classic romance, "A Place in the Sun," to his fiasco, "The Greatest Story Ever Told." This documentary captures the happy cultural commotion of early Hollywood, climaxing with an elating backstage account of the "cavalry-scale improvisation" that went into "Gunga Din." The son also chronicles his father's service in the U.S. Army Signal Corps, drawing on the director's unique color footage of the Allied push through Europe. The crucible of the war alters Stevens's choice of styles and subjects; when he goes off course as a director, you can still admire his moral and aesthetic commitment. The younger Stevens keeps himself out of the movie so resolutely that when his signature turns up on a wartime Christmas card, it comes as a poignant shock.—M.S. (Metropolitan Museum of Art; July 28.)

Triumph of the Will (1934)—Leni Riefenstahl recorded the Nazis' 1934 Nuremberg Party Rally in a propaganda film that became a notorious milestone for its use of rhythmic editing and massive compositions to achieve staggering visceral effects. It's a thrilling yet horrifying example of what Milan Kundera calls "totalitarian kitsch": the filmmakers and organizers banish (to borrow Kundera's words) "every display of individualism . . . every doubt . . . all irony." They also banish modern women—the only ones placed center-screen are costumed peasants. In German.—M.S. (Anthology Film Archives; July 29.)

Way Down East (1920)—The plot is Victorian, but the treatment is inspired. D. W. Griffith took a creaking, dated stage melodrama and turned it into a melodramatic epic. Lillian Gish is the girl betrayed by Lowell Sherman and eventually rescued from an icy river by Richard Barthelmess. Audiences giggle at bits here and there, but not at the sequence in which she refuses to part from her dead baby. Griffith stole from Thomas Hardy, but he stole beautifully. One of Griffith's greatest box-office successes, and a film that influenced several Russian epics. Silent.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; July 30 and Aug. 1.)

LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A series of films made from Broadway plays. July 27 and 29 at 1: "The Bat" (1926, Roland West; silent). . . . ¶ July 27 and 29 at 3: "The Bat Whispers" (1930, West). . . . ¶ July 27 at 6: "The Member of the Wedding" (1952, Fred Zinnemann). . . . ¶ July 27 at 8: "A Hatful of Rain" (1957, Zinnemann). . . . ¶ July 28 at 2:30: "As You Desire Me" (1932, George Fitzmaurice). . . . ¶ July 28 at 6: "Dinner at Eight" (1933, George Cukor). . . . ¶ July 28 at 8:15: "The Man Who Came to Dinner" (1942, William Keighley). . . . ¶ July 29 at 5 and July 31 at 1: "Success at Any Price" (1934, J. Walter Ruben). . . . ¶ July 30 at 12:30 and Aug. 1 at 12:45: "Way Down East" (†). . . . ¶ July 30 at 3:15: "Street Scene" (1931, King Vidor). . . . ¶ July 30 at 5 and July 31 at 6: "Kiki" (1931, Samuel Taylor). . . . ¶ July 31 at 3: "Counsellor-at-Law" (1933, William Wyler). . . . ¶ Aug. 1 at 3:30: "Three Faces East" (1930, Roy Del Ruth). . . . ¶ Aug. 1 at 6: "Sweet Bird of Youth" (1962, Richard Brooks).

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)—Through July 27: "Hit Man" (1972, George Armitage) and "Trouble Man" (1972, Ivan Dixon). . . . ¶ July 28: "Wattstax" (1973, Mel Stuart) and "Three Tough Guys" (1974, Duccio Tessari). . . . ¶ July 29-30: "Blacula" (1972, William Crain) and "The Mack" (1973, Michael Campus). . . . ¶ July 31: "Melinda" (1972, Hugh A. Robertson) and "Cool Breeze" (1972, Barry Pollack). . . . ¶ From Aug. 1: "Mandingo" (1975, Richard Fleischer).

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)—July 26-27 at 7: "Ripoux Contre Ripoux" (1990, Claude Zidi; in French). . . . ¶ July 26-27 at 9: "Zig Zag Story" (1982, Patrick Schulmann; in French). . . . ¶ From July 28: "She Lives to Ride" (1994, Alice Stone).

In Bryant Park, "The War of the Worlds."

TOBY MORRISON

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600)—French comedies, from the silent era to the present. July 26 at 2, 6, and 10: "Voyage Surprise" (1946, Pierre Prévert). . . . July 26 at 4 and 8: "The Shameless Old Lady" (1965, René Allio). . . . July 27 at 2 and July 29 at 6:15 and 10:15: "Lola" (1961, Jacques Demy). . . . July 27 at 3:45 and July 29 at 4:15 and 8: "Murmur of the Heart" (1971, Louis Malle). . . . July 28 at 2 and July 30 at 4:15 and 8: "The Aviator's Wife" (1980, Eric Rohmer). . . . July 28 at 4 and July 30 at 6 and 10: "Pauline at the Beach" (1982, Rohmer). . . . July 31 at 4 and 8 and Aug. 1 at 2 and 6: "Cousin, Cousine" (1976, Jean-Claude Tacchella). . . . July 31 at 6 and 10 and Aug. 1 at 4 and 8: "La Cage aux Folles" (†). . . . ¶ Weekend showings for children. July 29-30 at 2: "Little Women" (1933, George Cukor).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (1-718 784-0077)—Films by Orson Welles. July 29 at 2: "F for Fake" (1973). . . . July 29 at 4: "The Trial" (1962). . . . July 30 at 2: "The Immortal Story" (1968). . . . July 30 at 4: "Chimes at Midnight" (1967). . . . ¶ Laurel and Hardy films. Through July 28 at 10:30 and 1: "Hog Wild" (1930), "Their First Mistake" (1932), and "Brats" (1930). . . . From Aug. 1 at 10:30 and 1: "Way Out West" (1937, James W. Horne).

Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (570-3949)—July 28 at 7: "George Stevens: A Filmmaker's Journey" (†). . . . ¶ July 29 at 7: "Giant" (1956, Stevens).

Bryant Park, Sixth Ave. at 42nd St.—Mondays, starting at dusk: free drive-in-style moviegoing, beginning with Looney Tunes and coming attractions. The feature on July 31 will be "The War of the Worlds" (1953, Byron Haskin). (Rain date is the following night.)

Film al Fresco, at Le Madri Restaurant, 168 W. 18th St. (727-8022)—Sunday evenings, more films out-of-doors, with food and live music beginning at 6 and the movie starting at about 8:30. On July 30, the feature will be "Eat Drink Man Woman" (1994, Ang Lee; in Mandarin).

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—July 26 and 28 at 1:30 and July 27 at 6:15: "Little Caesar" (1930, Mervyn LeRoy). . . . ¶ July 26 and 28 at 4 and July 27 at 2:30: "Dodsworth" (1936, William Wyler). . . . ¶ July 29-30 at 1:30: "Written on the Wind" (1957, Douglas Sirk). . . . ¶ July 29-30 at 4: "The Savage Eye" (1959, Ben Maddow, Sidney Meyers, and Joseph Strick).

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—July 28 at 8 and July 29 at 6: Two different programs of films by Marie Menken. . . . ¶ July 28 at 10 and July 30 at 5: Short avant-garde films from Austria. . . . ¶ July 29 at 7:30: "The Adventures of the Exquisite Corpse" (1967, Andrew Noren). . . . ¶ July 29 at 9: "Triumph of the Will" (†). . . . ¶ July 30 at 7: "Olympiad" (1938, Leni Riefenstahl), a documentary.

The 18th Asian American International Film Festival—A weekend (July 28-30) of new films from Hong Kong, Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, China, India, Iran, Cambodia, the Philippines, Canada, Australia, and the United States. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. For information, call 925-8685.)

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Saturday- and Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On July 29 at 7, the feature will be "Another Way" (1982; in Hungarian); on July 30 at 7, "Making Love" (1982, Arthur Hiller).

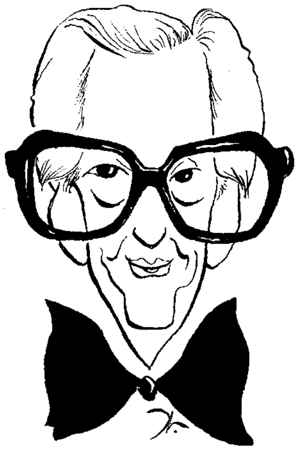
Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Aug. 1 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "The Clockmaker" (1973, Bertrand Tavernier; in French).

THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

EXIT LEW

Lew R. Wasserman, who for half a century was the head of the entertainment behemoth MCA, is as publicity-averse as John Gotti, and the resemblance doesn't end there. Like a godfather, Wasserman, with his disapproval, caused meltdowns in those who offended or, worse, betrayed him. Even now that his power has eroded, the excommunicated, while they no longer have anything to fear from his wrath, still decline to be quoted. Only the dead are safe from attribution.


Lew Wasserman

Wasserman is now spoken of in the past tense, but he is unquestionably among us, an active eighty-two in a near-anorexic frame. The past tense merely signifies that he has relinquished his job as chairman of MCA—which the Japanese colossus Matsushita recently sold to the Seagram Company—to become its chairman emeritus. For, while Wasserman will keep his office, he will not keep his power, even though he will undoubtedly continue to rise at five to check on box-office figures and then drive to work. The other day, one of his friends, Herb Steinberg, went as far as to remark, "Lew will come into his office even if he has to buy a ticket."

Wasserman started out as a movie usher and in 1936, after working at a Cleveland night club, joined MCA, Jules Stein's band-booking and talent agency. Over the years, Wasserman has shown so little interest in self-promotion that he has been called Hollywood's invisible man, for he was known only to those who were famous, often as a result of his efforts. In the strident world of show business, Wasserman's voice was usually no more than a whisper, although, like any mogul worth his black belt in intimidation, he was known to shout—no, *scream*—at hapless executives who didn't "get it," it being what Wasserman wanted. L.R.W., as he sometimes initialled his rare and excruciatingly brief memos, did not waste words.

What irritated him most was any failure by his executives to communicate important information, and, by his standards, any scrap of information could be important in the grand design of a deal. He wanted to know everything that those who worked for him knew, preferably before they did.

Some feel that the might of the aging lion was directed recently at Michael Ovitz, the head of the Creative Artists Agency. Wasserman, the theory goes, felt that he had been left out of the loop in the sale of MCA, in which Ovitz was a key player. Perhaps not coincidentally, Ovitz's long negotiation for the top job at MCA ultimately fizzled. The irony is that Ovitz's role model was and is Lew Wasserman, and he should have known that nobody keeps anything from Wasserman, even when one is bound, as Ovitz claims to have been, by a confidentiality clause.

Meeting Wasserman in his lair was always an exercise in getting to the point. He was courteous but not courtly, and after the minutest small talk the visitor would sense that he had better address the business at hand. Wasserman is action-oriented and not disposed to dally or dither. The silence of power hung over his antiseptic office, and one knew without his saying so when the meeting was over. No telephone would ring, and nobody would be waiting when he escorted the visitor out to the elevator.

For Wasserman, everything has always come down to the numbers, whether those were the first hour's box-office figures, which he could project in a trice, or what a film would ultimately make, or, four years ago, the microscopic intricacies of how to get the maximum for his shareholders from Matsushita when it bought MCA. One close friend who declined to be named listed these qualities as true of Lew: (1) "When you have his word, that's all you need"; (2) "He is fanatically loyal until and unless he feels the loyalty has been misplaced, in which case watch out"; and (3) "He reduces every negotiation and problem to its essence."

While the departure of Wasserman may be considered a generational passage, he and his contemporaries displaced a still earlier tribe—the founder moguls, the true innovators, who created the asset values that Wasserman built upon. Those earlier men—Goldwyn, Selznick, Zanuck, Warner, Disney, and Thalberg—were the ones whose heirs the Turners, Bronfmans, Murdochs, Eisners, Rosses, Sonys, and Matsushitas became.

Wasserman was a bridge to that earlier time. As an agent, he had actually dealt with many of the pioneers before he became a pioneer himself. He turned

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHAEL WITTE

the bailiwick of an unruly bunch of loudmouthed, egotistical showmen into an orderly and rational business, and then the waves of change washed over him, too.

AFTER MIDNIGHT

HIGH above the East River, on a dark maintenance platform under a well-known bridge, a young jeweller named Gregory crouched and, with the help of a flashlight, studied a fat rubber cord. This was long after midnight a couple of weeks ago. All around Gregory, shadowy figures climbed ladders, spread tarps, covered girders with blankets, and rigged complicated harnesses. Gregory, his jeweller's concentration fully engaged, inspected the cord—forty feet long unflexed—lying coiled on the platform. It was composed of hundreds of thin beige strands, cinched together every foot or so. There was a fair amount of fraying, particularly toward one end. Gregory fingered the busted strands thoughtfully. Did he really want to bet his life on this thing?

A few feet above his head, trains and cars roared and whined, shaking the platform. Nearby, a steel floor plate had been removed and a coffin-size hole yawned. A hundred and thirty-five feet below, the river's surface, seen through the hole, looked solid, a whorled gray slab in the yellow lights of the Brooklyn waterfront. There was a police car parked on the waterfront, near the base of the bridge. One of Gregory's confederates, a bartender and college student named Ian, was monitoring the police car through a pair of binoculars while listening to police-radio transmissions on a pair of headphones. Such, such are the rigors and peculiar precautions of guerrilla bungee-jumping.

The owner of the cord was Michael O'Mahony, a former tent rigger for the Big Apple Circus. Brooklyn-born and bred, thirty years old, he was also the evening's jumpmaster. When he had finished rigging harnesses, he addressed the group. "This will happen fast," he said. "We got eight people jumping tonight. Some of you, it's your first time, I know, and you may feel you need some extra time, but, with the cops sitting down there, I could be making a two-thousand-dollar mistake, so it's three minutes in the hole each person. If you haven't jumped after three minutes, I'll pull you out of there, right? Now, I'm going first. Who's going second?"

"I'll go second," Gregory said. The cord had apparently passed inspection.

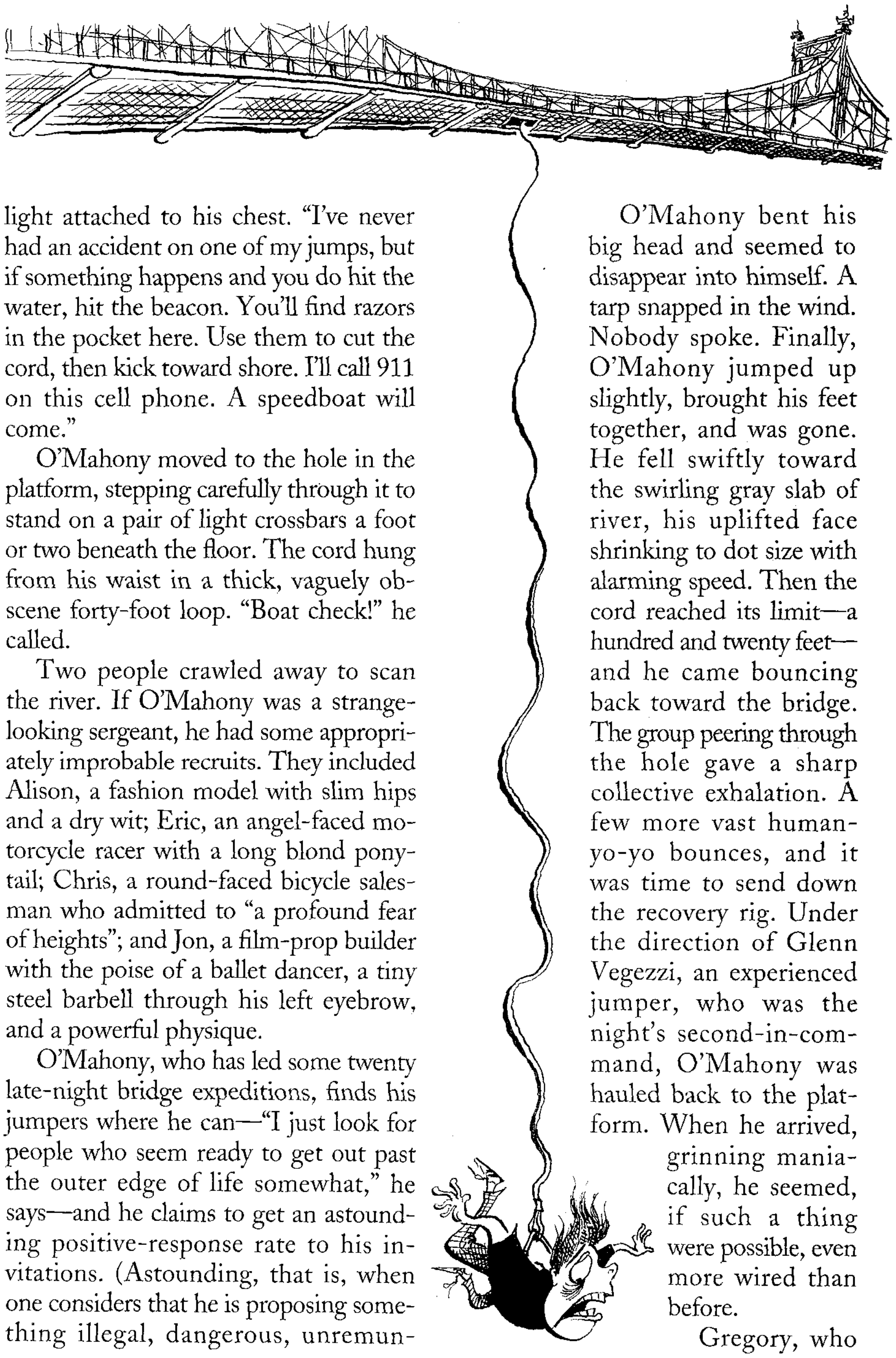
O'Mahony set a blue night-light on a girder and demonstrated how to hook a carabiner from the jump harness to a retrieval rig that would be lowered to him. Tall and thin, with a huge head of red curls, O'Mahony made an unlikely drill sergeant, but he had plenty of commando intensity. "This life jacket has a beacon," he said, flicking on a bright light attached to his chest. "I've never had an accident on one of my jumps, but if something happens and you do hit the water, hit the beacon. You'll find razors in the pocket here. Use them to cut the cord, then kick toward shore. I'll call 911 on this cell phone. A speedboat will come."

O'Mahony moved to the hole in the platform, stepping carefully through it to stand on a pair of light crossbars a foot or two beneath the floor. The cord hung from his waist in a thick, vaguely obscene forty-foot loop. "Boat check!" he called.

Two people crawled away to scan the river. If O'Mahony was a strange-looking sergeant, he had some appropriately improbable recruits. They included Alison, a fashion model with slim hips and a dry wit; Eric, an angel-faced motorcycle racer with a long blond ponytail; Chris, a round-faced bicycle salesman who admitted to "a profound fear of heights"; and Jon, a film-prop builder with the poise of a ballet dancer, a tiny steel barbell through his left eyebrow, and a powerful physique.

O'Mahony, who has led some twenty late-night bridge expeditions, finds his jumpers where he can—"I just look for people who seem ready to get out past the outer edge of life somewhat," he says—and he claims to get an astounding positive-response rate to his invitations. (Astounding, that is, when one considers that he is proposing something illegal, dangerous, unremunerative, and terrifying.) He does it, apparently, just for the adrenaline hell of it. "And because I can," he says. The hipster individualists whom he drafts seem surprisingly ready to submit to military-type discipline. At least, they seemed so that night—stealthily climbing catwalks onto the bridge in teams of three, giving come-aheads over walkie-talkies, using code names like Mr. Red and Mr. Black without a smirk.

The lookouts came clambering back across the platform. "No boats downriver." "Nothing upriver."

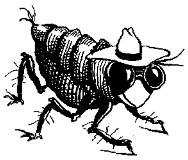


O'Mahony bent his big head and seemed to disappear into himself. A tarp snapped in the wind. Nobody spoke. Finally, O'Mahony jumped up slightly, brought his feet together, and was gone. He fell swiftly toward the swirling gray slab of river, his uplifted face shrinking to dot size with alarming speed. Then the cord reached its limit—a hundred and twenty feet—and he came bouncing back toward the bridge. The group peering through the hole gave a sharp collective exhalation. A few more vast human-yo-yo bounces, and it was time to send down the recovery rig. Under the direction of Glenn Vegezzi, an experienced jumper, who was the night's second-in-command, O'Mahony was hauled back to the platform. When he arrived, grinning maniacally, he seemed, if such a thing were possible, even more wired than before.

Gregory, who

BUGGING OUT

A QUARTER-CENTURY or so ago, I saw a rather earnest movie done in the form of a documentary and narrated by a fictional scientist who has been drummed out of the scientific community for tiresomely asserting that insects are taking over the world. It wasn't just that the little buggers would outlast anything humans threw at them and dance on our graves. No, no, this entomological Cassandra begged us to understand, in the sort of language we now get courtesy of Mark from Michigan—*it is all part of the plan.*



It sounded perfectly plausible to me, but then I was eighteen and stoned. Successive assaults by the multitudinous cockroaches in my college dorm only heightened my sense of impending doom. Still, in time I ceased gibbering about the coming Armageddon and got a life.

But now, each summer, after a few days in our mossy rental on the Maine coast, I find myself, like that chimp contemplating the human skull, considering my position in the chain of being. I find myself, too, on about the fifth trip into town to the hardware store, cozying up to the proprietor. "Rufus," I say, "they've been guzzling that stuff you sold me like it was strawberry milkshake. I'm a regular customer. Surely you have something *special* under that counter? DDT? Napalm? Sarin? Just between us. No need for the E.P.A. to know anything. Heh heh."

I know it's tricky, revealing one's insecticide wet dreams in the magazine that published "Silent Spring"—and, what's more, on a typewriter just up the road from E. B. White's old barn, home to the most famous spider in history. But there it is.

Each summer in our cabin, where—true fact—some years ago a woman died of complications from a Brown Recluse Spider bite, my wife, my children, my dog (in his capacity as larval-troop carrier), and I are intimately reacquainted with the insect kingdom: flies, mosquitoes, midges, gnats, moths, earwigs, beetles, weevils, wasps, planthoppers, assassin bugs (that is an actual type), backswimmers, thrips, lice, stoneflies, crickets, termites, damselflies, dragonflies, horseflies, ticks, mites, millipedes, and centipedes.

This summer brought us friendship with yet another glory of creation: carpenter ants. My first clue that the spring had not been a silent one came when I walked into the room that serves as our living, eating, and sleeping quarters to find a significant pile of extremely unpleasant matter heaped on the floor. Naturally, this drew my eye to the ceiling beam above. Where, exactly, I mused, did this revolting, excreting winged horde fit in the ultimate scheme of things? Did He who made the Lamb make them? The British scientist J. B. S. Haldane, asked what a lifetime of study had taught him about the nature of God, replied, "An inordinate fondness for beetles." You could call this point of view bugnosticism.

YET now I see—writing this, enfolded in citronella, my face sticky with Repel—that they also serve who only creep and crawl. These unlovely arthropods show us our true selves. There is the Zen monk who removes his sandals lest he step on an ant. And there is me, shaken by my wife out of a rum-deep sleep at 2 A.M., handed a flyswatter, and told to kill—kill!—the mosquito that is freaking out the kids. In summer, I see my place in the ultimate scheme of things: groggy in a bathrobe, snarling and swearing, ridiculous, fencing with the vanguard of Apocalypse.

—CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY

---

was making his first jump ever, did not use a large fraction of his allotted three minutes in the hole. Talking into a tape recorder, he answered some questions from O'Mahony about his vital statistics, plus one about whether he was making this jump of his own free will. Then he was gone.

After he returned, he shyly reported feeling "hyper-alert."

All the jumps went smoothly. The hard part, clearly, was the waiting. Jon, the film-prop builder, hunkered in the dark, silently chain-smoking, for at least an hour. Then, when his turn came to jump, a party boat appeared, chugging slowly upriver, its lights pulsating, and he had to wait, already harnessed to the cord, for many more long minutes. After his jump, his friend Alison took him aside and solemnly kissed him on the mouth.

Chris, when his turn came, muttered that he had "the shakes," and went back to the end of the line.

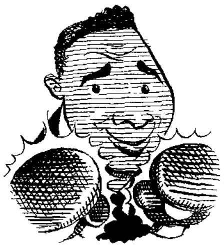
Alison vamped while O'Mahony cinched the harness on her, fore and aft, and when, as she stood in the hole, he asked her age, she said, "I hope to be twenty-nine soon." To the will-and-volition question, she replied, "Utterly, dude."

This was her second jump. She leaped with style.

Chris went last. As he stood in the hole, answering questions for the tape recorder, O'Mahony said to him, "You are not going to die tonight." Chris looked unconvinced. When he finally jumped, he disobeyed instructions and grabbed the cord, mildly abrading his forearm, and when the recovery rig was lowered he was disoriented and had trouble attaching the carabiner.

The eastern sky was whitening as Chris was hauled back up through the platform floor. The police car was still parked on the waterfront. O'Mahony, becoming frantic about the dissipating darkness, directed a furious restoration of the platform, replacing the floor plate, packing up his equipment, and putting all the tarps and ladders back where the bridge workers had left them. Then the group moved out, jogging silently down the catwalks in teams of three, reconvening briefly at the base of the bridge for handshakes and goodbyes, then melting off in different directions into the dawn-crisp city.

BOXING'S LAST GENTLEMAN



Floyd Patterson

If Muhammad Ali was the first trash-talker in boxing, Floyd Patterson was the last gentleman. Patterson, whom Governor George Pataki recently appointed chairman of the State Athletic Commission, the body that regulates professional boxing and wrestling in New York, was the model of the pre-Ali athlete: grateful, soft-spoken, self-effacing. The quiet kid from Brooklyn, who once stooped to pick up an opponent's mouthpiece during a fight, seemed too sensitive to be a boxer. Although he was the youngest heavyweight champion in history, he always came across more like a challenger, a fighter disabled as much by his inner doubts as by his opponent's punches.

Pataki's choice is a symbolic one: in the age of Don King, Patterson stands as the last remnant of nobility in the sport. Both he and the Governor see the ex-champ's mission as reviving old-fashioned prizefighting in New York. Back when Patterson won his first title, in 1956, New York was the undisputed mecca of boxing. Standing outside a converted chicken barn that now houses a gym on his property in New Paltz, Patterson throws a jab in the air as he recalls the old days he'd like to bring back. "You had fights every night," he says. "You had Monday nights at Eastern Parkway. Wednesdays were the St. Nicholas Arena. Every Friday night the fights were televised, sponsored by Gillette Blue Blades."

At sixty, the five-foot-eleven-inch Patterson tips the scales at a trim hundred and eighty-five pounds—five pounds less than his last fighting weight. Each morning, he either does four miles of roadwork or pounds the heavy bag for fifteen minutes, jumps rope, and crunches out two hundred situps. "Being in shape," he says in his soft tenor voice, "is a beautiful feeling." Patterson is not a large man; his Popeye forearms and hamlike hands are the only outsize things about him. He is a quintessential fifties guy; his hair still sports that signature rise in front.

Patterson feels most at home in the country. Exiled to reform school in the Catskills when he was ten, he resolved to live nearby someday. He bought an old estate there in 1965, and from it, for the last twenty years, he has been teaching local boys the art of boxing and also how to be a man. His counsel is simple: Do your roadwork, keep moving, and never let down your guard. This afternoon, two of his charges have come to work out. Raymond Downey, twenty-six, is a promising middleweight, who has won all five of his professional fights. Sean Helweg, Jr., at seventy-six pounds, might be classified as a lighter-than-featherweight; he's just ten years old.

The downstairs of the chicken barn is slightly smaller than a regulation-size ring. Patterson helps Sean slip on mittenlike boxing gloves before putting on his own worn red ones. In the center of the ring, Patterson gets down on his knees, but he's still half a head taller than his opponent.

Sean has spiky hair and the hard gaze of a veteran puncher. At the bell, he circles to the right and aggressively jabs with his left. "Left glove high," Patterson whispers. "Keep your left glove high." Patterson uses his old peekaboo defense, ducking under some punches, blocking others with his glove. Occasionally, he throws a lazy roundhouse right to keep the challenger honest. When Sean tags him with a right to the jaw, Patterson rubs what boxing writers derided as his china chin and laughs. "Good, very good," he says to the kid, who is grinning like a champ.

Patterson's new job is a vindication of sorts, for he still seems wounded by invisible punches. He couldn't care less about politics ("I like everybody," he says), but he is passionate about the sport that seemed to give him as much suffering as happiness. "I've always felt beneath everybody else," he says. "Even when I won the World Championship."

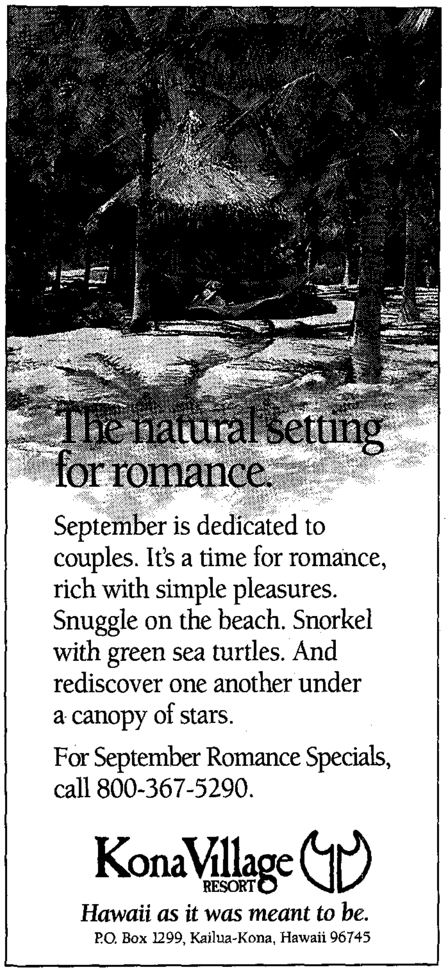
BOWERY CHUMS

The other night, two young women at the entrance to the Matthew Marks gallery, at Tenth Avenue and Twenty-second Street, were naked except for black high-heeled shoes and black Cleopatra wigs, and they looked impassive. So did the audience filing in for a tribute to Leigh Bowery, the Australian-born, London-based performance artist, dresser up, and general maestro of outrage. Bowery, who also modelled for the painter Lucian Freud, was fairly famous when he died, of AIDS, at thirty-three, on the last day of last year, and the evening was a big draw. So much so that a group of latecomers found the sizable Marks space nearly filled to capacity and were relieved, if baffled, to come upon a block of empty seats in the front row.

The first performer, Ron Athey, was hoisted onstage wrapped from head to toe in duct tape, and a couple of assistants proceeded to cut him loose with shears. An expanse of naked, plump flesh was bared, pretty much in the faces of those in the front row. The next performer, a seemingly demented insect of an individual with staring eyes, set to work attacking a wooden stool with a heavy axe. As the performer smashed the stool to bits, the axe broke, with an unscripted thwack, and the head flew off. Somehow, it remained onstage. The mystery of those empty front-row seats suddenly didn't seem so mysterious.

Next, the cheerfully bawdy drag performer The Lady Bunny came onstage and pointed out—needlessly by now—that people sitting in the front-row seats were a target. She threatened them with a projectile action involving an enema—for which Bowery was famous—but then desisted. Finally, the two naked women, now also wearing black gloves, took the stage. They were, it turned out, the duo Dancenoise. One of them grabbed a beaker of stage blood, splashed it around, and hurled it offstage, thickly spattering the wall just above—yes, those front-row seats. The late arrivals were pensive at the evening's end. "I was ready to cut and run at a moment's notice," one finally admitted. He spoke, it emerged, for all. ♦

This week's contributors: David Brown, William Finnegan, Richard Stengel, Anthony Haden-Guest.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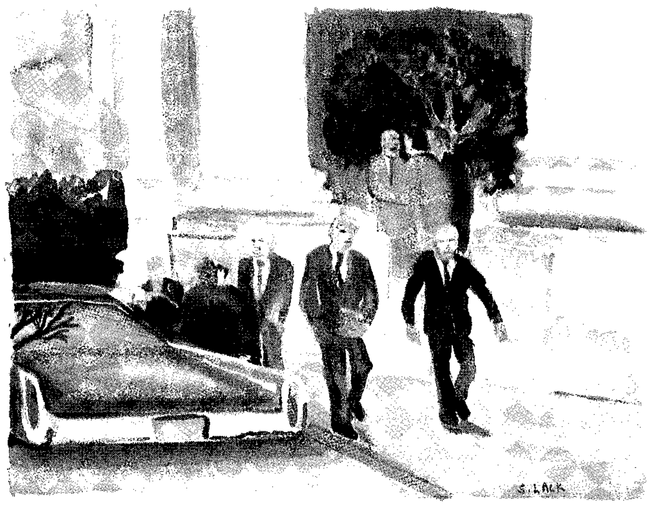
ANNALS OF LAW

THE THIN WHITE LINE

A federal indictment in Miami depicts six defense lawyers as virtual traitors in the war on drugs. Is the government overreaching?

BY FREDRIC DANNEN

MIAMI was a boomtown in the nineteen-eighties, a time when drug money flowed in by the billions, like petrodollars. Joel Hirschhorn was Diamond Joel then. He wore a diamond tie tack, a diamond pinkie ring, a gold bracelet, and a gold Rolex with a diamond bezel, which he said was called a Miami Timex. He got himself a forty-foot boat—a sportfisherman—and then traded it in for a bigger one. He liked to call it "the boat that dope bought," though the actual name he gave it was the A Quit-All—an allusion to his profession, which was criminal-defense attorney.



Members of the Miami defense bar argue that some of the misdeeds the six lawyers are accused of were in the past considered perfectly proper.

STEPHEN LACK

Maybe the ostentation was an affront to the agents and prosecutors who were fighting the drug war, and earning little by comparison, but Hirschhorn didn't worry about them at the time. The money to be made by members of what was derisively called "the white-powder bar" of Miami was tremendous—why pretend otherwise? You could get a good whiff of the prosperity any night at the bar of the Mutiny Hotel, in Coconut Grove, where attorneys drank champagne with their trafficker clients. "Rarely did a week go by without a five-figure fee," Hirschhorn says. "Clients just walked in and plunked the money down. I got paid in cash, gold, silver, cars, planes, real estate—you name it."

For most Miami attorneys who specialized in drug cases, including Hirschhorn, the boom times ended with the decade. The enforcement effort in south Florida ultimately proved too disruptive to most of the traffickers, and by now the importation of drugs into the United States has largely migrated west. True, the Cali cartel of Colombia, which is reputed to be the principal supplier of cocaine to the United States, did continue to ship cocaine through Florida well into the nineties, but Hirschhorn was not on the shortlist of attorneys called upon by cartel members. Today, he does mostly white-collar work. He has shed all the gaudy jewelry, and his boat is up for sale. "It's too damn expensive to use," he says. "And since the government chased away all the dopers—and their boat mechanics—you can't get decent help anymore."

Hirschhorn says that the practice of defending drug traffickers has become too dangerous anyway—and he isn't talking about the danger posed by irate clients. He and his peers had antagonized the federal government for too long; as the drug war intensified, so, apparently, did the government's hostility toward lawyers. First, the prosecutors used forfeiture provisions in drug cases to confiscate fees paid to attorneys, on the ground that the funds were proceeds of illegal activity; and they increasingly came to view lawyer conduct that had once been taken for granted as criminal. Nowhere else in the nation, it seems, is the tension between the government and the defense bar greater than in Miami. "A lot of my colleagues who didn't realize that the eighties were over find themselves in the nineties looking over their shoulder," Hirschhorn says.

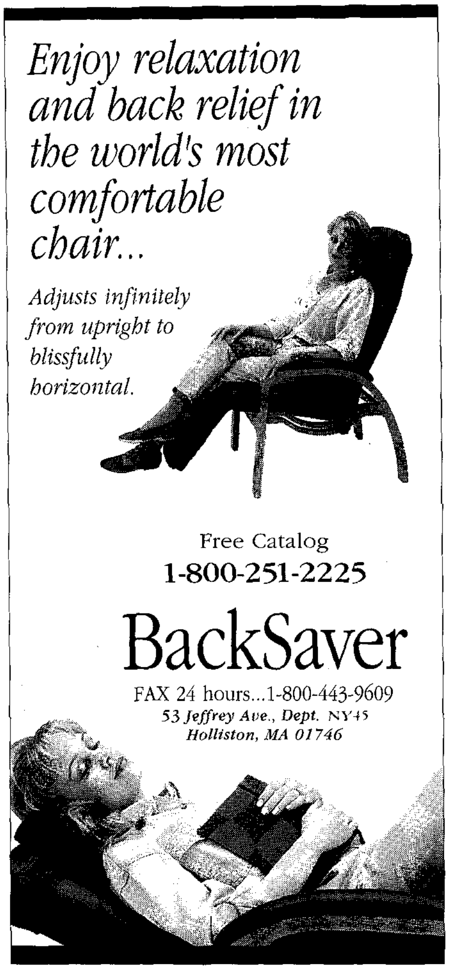
On June 5th of this year, the Miami United States Attorney's Office unsealed a massive racketeering indictment that illustrated how high the stakes have become for lawyers in drug cases who are seen by the government as having crossed the line into criminality. The indictment runs to a hundred and sixty-one pages, and it describes in detail the activities not only of the reputed bosses and scores of reputed members of the Cali cartel but also of six American lawyers—Michael Abbell, William Moran, Donald Ferguson, Joel Rosenthal, Robert Moore, and Francisco Laguna—who were hired to represent some of them. The lawyers are alleged to have engaged in a number of illegal acts, most of which would traditionally have been classified as obstruction of justice—acts such as preparing false affidavits or trying to discourage arrested cartel members from coöperating with the government.

Before the indictment was handed down, however, the lawyers learned that instead of being charged with obstruction, which is punishable by a maximum of five years per count, they would be charged with the very crime allegedly committed by their clients—importing into the United States more than two hundred and twenty tons of cocaine, an offense that carries a mandatory life sentence. In the government's view, when the lawyers' actions were taken together they demonstrated that the lawyers acted not as mere lawyers but as "house counsel" to the enterprise itself. In addition to the drug conspiracy, the government planned to charge the lawyers under the RICO, or Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations, statute; according to this theory, preparing a false affidavit was an act of racketeering. In addition, each of the lawyers allegedly received money from the cartel and then paid some of it back, or to a third party—thereby, according to the government, concealing the source of the funds—so they would also be charged with money laundering.

In April and May, before the indictment came down, three of the lawyers pleaded guilty. Joel Rosenthal and Robert Moore each confessed to one count of money laundering; Francisco Laguna pleaded to one count of the conspiracy to import cocaine and one count of obstruction of justice. A fourth lawyer, Donald Ferguson, held out until after he was named as a defendant in the indictment, but then, on July 3rd, he, too, pleaded guilty, to one count of money laundering and one count of conspiring to obstruct justice. All four lawyers, who are yet to be sentenced, are expected to appear as witnesses against Michael Abbell and William Moran, the two lawyers who, to date, are still going to trial. Abbell and Moran will have to sit at the defense table along with twenty-odd alleged drug traffickers also named in the indictment. Abbell has achieved the greatest notoriety in the case, because he was once a section chief in the Criminal Division of the Justice Department and, before he switched sides, was involved in extradition proceedings against drug traffickers. Rosenthal and Ferguson, meanwhile, are former federal prosecutors.

Members of the Miami defense bar, although they concede that many of the acts that all six lawyers are accused of committing are plainly illegal, are angered and stunned by the government's use of the racketeering and drug-conspiracy statutes. "This indictment is so overboard as to be beyond imagination," says Abbell's lawyer, Roy Black, who is best known for winning an acquittal in the William Kennedy Smith rape case. Moran's lawyer, Albert Krieger, who unsuccessfully defended John Gotti in New York in 1992, argues that not all the attorneys who took pleas may have believed they were guilty. "Can I understand if they were so frightened by the potential for life imprisonment that they just threw up their hands?" he says.

Government officials confidently say they will let the jury decide whether the case is excessive, and they deny any motive of vindictiveness. Still, the hard feelings are there. William Rosenblatt, who ran the United States Customs Service branch in Miami during the time—nearly four years—the case was being assembled, and who retired last December, does not attempt to disguise his loathing for turncoats like Abbell. "I look upon these attorneys, if they're guilty, as trai-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tors," he says. "Hell, are we in a war or not? Why aren't these guys being charged with treason?"

THE case against the Cali cartel and its lawyers began on August 23, 1991, with a shipment of concrete fence posts and cornerstones that arrived at the port of Miami on a steamer from Venezuela. Customs agents and agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration boarded the boat to inspect the cargo, and discovered that the hollow cores of the concrete blocks contained about thirteen and a half tons of cocaine. Instead of seizing the shipment, the agents conducted surveillance to see where it would end up. The concrete blocks sat in a Miami warehouse for three months, and then, in mid-November, operatives of the Cali cartel removed some of them and took them by truck to Longview, Texas. At this point, several people were arrested, including Gustavo Naranjo, a native of Cali who lived in Longview and ran the operations of the cartel along the southwest United States border.

Naranjo was locked up in a Texas jail, and on November 20th he received a visit from a customs agent based in Miami named Edward Kacerosky. It is often difficult to get jailed members of the Cali cartel to coöperate with law-enforcement agents, because it is well understood by all concerned that the price may be death for both the coöperator and his family in Colombia. Nevertheless, according to an affidavit submitted by Kacerosky, Naranjo began to give him details of the Texas operation and of other activities of the Cali cartel. Kacerosky was called back to Miami on November 23rd, and three days later he telephoned Naranjo's court-appointed lawyer, a local man, to let him know that he planned to return to Texas for further talks with Naranjo. The lawyer told Kacerosky he would be wasting his time: a Miami attorney named Joel Rosenthal had suddenly shown up at the Texas jail, and Naranjo wasn't talking to the government any longer.

Joel Rosenthal, who is over six feet tall and trim, with a distinct New York accent, was well known to people in Miami law enforcement. He had been an assistant United States Attorney, first in Manhattan and then in Miami, where he won numerous convictions in drug cases and rose to chief of the fraud section. In 1981, he left the government and went into private practice as a defense attorney. He soon found himself representing members of the Medellín cartel of Colombia—the Cali's more violent and less corporate predecessor, which more or less died with its boss, Pablo Escobar, in 1993. Rosenthal liked to boast about his meetings with Escobar in Colombia. He bought a thirty-three-foot boat and docked it directly across from Joel Hirschhorn's A Quit-All. Nevertheless, Rosenthal managed to maintain good relations with federal agents. "We certainly saw him as a legitimate, though high-priced, lawyer," Thomas Cash, the former head of the D.E.A. division in Miami, says.

From the day Rosenthal showed up at the Texas jail, he no longer struck the agents as legitimate. He hired a Texas attorney to represent Naranjo in place of his court-appointed lawyer, and was alleged to have paid that attorney nearly three hundred thousand dollars out of funds that he himself had received from the cartel. (This is the basis of the money-laundering count to which Rosenthal has pleaded guilty.) Naranjo was nevertheless convicted, and in November of 1993 he once again began coöperating with the government. This time, agents wanted to know about Joel Rosenthal. According to Kacerosky's affidavit, Naranjo claimed that Rosenthal, upon arriving at the prison, said he had been sent by Mike—that is, Miguel Rodríguez Orejuela, the alleged Cali-cartel boss—and that Rosenthal reminded Naranjo that if he talked to the authorities he "knew what would happen." (Rosenthal has denied threatening Naranjo; he was ultimately not charged with that offense.)

As the investigation progressed, agents heard stories of other lawyers who were apparently trying to reinforce the cartel's code of silence—perhaps the strongest evidence that the lawyers were acting as house counsel. After Harold Ackerman, who ran the Miami operation of the Cali cartel, was arrested, in April, 1992, his attorney, Robert Moore, a short, slightly paunchy man with a mustache, whose father was a city judge, was also alleged to have reminded his client that coöperating with the government could be risky. The government heard evidence that on Moore's instructions Ackerman's son, Alan, cleaned out his father's safe-deposit boxes of one million one hundred thousand dollars in cash and brought the money to Moore's office for safekeeping. Moore was alleged to have paid back all but fifty thousand dollars over the next year—an act of money laundering in the eyes of the government.

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Only one of the lawyers targeted

in the case was not based in Miami, and that was Michael Abbell; he worked out of a small criminal-law firm in Washington, D.C. Now fifty-four, married, and the father of three, Abbell is a graduate of Harvard Law School who joined the Justice Department in 1967 and, fourteen years later, was made head of its international-affairs office, which negotiated with foreign countries for custody of international criminals, including drug traffickers. In 1984, Abbell left the Justice Department to go into private practice. Later the same year, Gilberto Rodríguez Orejuela, who is reputed to have founded the Cali cartel with his brother, Miguel, was arrested in Spain. Gilberto Rodríguez faced indictments in New York and California, and the Justice Department petitioned Spain for custody of him. Rodríguez turned to Abbell, who sought and obtained a conflict-of-interest ruling from the Justice Department, permitting him to represent the alleged drug lord. To the frustration of Justice, Rodríguez was sent back to Colombia, where he was released. In the late eighties, Abbell made himself even more unpopular with his former allies in the drug war by appearing on Capitol Hill to argue against treaty amendments that were being sought by drug-enforcement agents.

Abbell continued to do legal work for the Rodríguez brothers, and in January, 1991, he hired an obscure Miami lawyer, Francisco Laguna, as a full-time associate. Laguna, who is in his thirties and was born in Colombia and speaks fluent Spanish, appears, from the indictment, to have been the most deeply immersed of all the lawyers in the day-to-day affairs of the Cali cartel. He maintained frequent contact with Miguel Rodríguez by public telephone. Unfortunately for Laguna, federal agents had obtained the code numbers of the debit cards he used to make his calls, and were able to intercept many of the conversations.

Abbell and Laguna worked together closely. In early 1991, the reputed No. 3 boss of the Cali cartel, José Santacruz Londoño, faced the forfeiture of sixty-five million dollars that had been seized in New York and elsewhere. Laguna was alleged to have received documents from an economist working for Santacruz which showed that the seized money had come from legitimate sources, such as a cattle farm and a sugar plantation. A short time later, according to the Miami indictment, Abbell "voiced his concern to Laguna about the obvious falsity of the documents," and asked Laguna to "amend the documents so that the falsity was not obvious." The phony documents were filed in Brooklyn federal court, the indictment says.

Though Abbell was something of a scholar—he had collaborated in the writing of a multi-volume treatise on extradition—he had not spent a lot of time in the courtroom. For assistance with the Santacruz forfeiture case, he turned to Donald Ferguson, a well-groomed and polite man, who was a far more experienced trial lawyer, and who had been a federal prosecutor in Miami during the mid-seventies. The Miami indictment does not specify what, if anything, Ferguson did in the forfeiture case that was improper, but it does accuse him of a number of other illegal acts. To give one example, Ferguson and Francisco Laguna visited Harold Ackerman, the jailed Miami cartel boss, and were alleged to have got him to sign a false affidavit that Miguel Rodríguez needed for a legal proceeding in Colombia.

Of the six accused lawyers, the one whose appearance in the case seemed to surprise people the least was William Moran, a fifty-six-year-old who has a trim, graying beard and is given to wearing cowboy boots. His law practice had never been a typical one, even for Miami. In June, 1980, his partner, George Gold, was shot dead in front of the law firm's front door, and three years later Moran's ground-floor office was fire bombed. (Both deeds were ascribed to disgruntled drug clients, but recent evidence suggests that Gold was simply mistaken for someone else.) Moran had a drinking problem, and in 1984 he was arrested for cocaine possession. His life has been marked by tragedy: his first wife committed suicide, and his second wife died of cancer. He has since remarried; his third wife accompanied him to his arraignment wearing a cowboy hat.

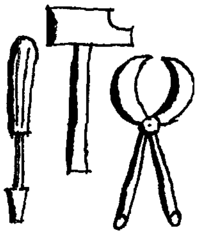
No one ever said that Moran was not a talented trial lawyer. He started out in the sixties as a prosecutor in the Dade County State Attorney's Office—the office that, after he left, was run by Janet Reno. As a defense attorney, he fought hard for his clients. "Some prosecutors did not like his style," Lawrence Kerr, who was Moran's associate after Gold died, says. "They might say he was combative, even obnoxious." The Miami federal prosecutor Michael Sullivan recalls that once when he was in the middle of a closing argument Moran got up and strolled right between him and the jury.

Moran is said to have met with Gilberto Rodríguez Orejuela in 1984 in a Spanish prison, and, after that, was hired by Gilberto and Miguel to represent members of the Cali cartel. The Miami indictment accuses Moran of many of the same alleged acts of racketeering that have been levelled against the other lawyers, such as preparing false affidavits and trying to prevent arrested suspects from coöperating. He is expected to continue to maintain his innocence, and go to trial. "Bill doesn't believe he did anything wrong, and therefore he has no choice but to stand and fight," Kerr, his former associate, says.

THOUGH the Miami indictment is one of the toughest attacks on alleged lawyer misconduct in memory, the United States Attorney's Office seems to have been unprepared for the indignation of the defense bar. As is customary with a pending matter, prosecutors handling the case—William Pearson, Edward Ryan, and Lisa Hirsch—have declined to speak to the press, and in a recent interview the Miami United States Attorney, Kendall Coffey, was unusually guarded. Still, Coffey maintained, the use of the conspiracy statute against the attorneys was fully justified. If a person who merely loads cocaine on a boat, and does nothing more, can be charged with the crimes of the entire enterprise, he asked, then why not a lawyer who tries to shield that enterprise by improper means?

Members of the defense bar claim, however, that the indictment is an attempt to intimidate lawyers who defend drug suspects. They say that the six lawyers, in addition to being charged with undisputed crimes, are accused of a range of misdeeds that until now have been considered perfectly proper. For example, on at least one occasion William Moran secured bond for a drug suspect who subsequently fled the country, and the securing of bond has been charged against Moran as an act of racketeering. Defense attorneys argue that their clients jump bail all the time, so to make the lawyer culpable for this—let alone on a racketeering count—is absurd. Government agents say the evidence at the trial will show that Moran knew that the suspect would flee, and that he arranged for the bond to be paid at the direction of Miguel Rodríguez.

On another occasion, Moran, according to the indictment, confirmed to a client that a certain Rafael Lombrano was a confidential informant, and about two months later Lombrano was murdered. Though Moran has not been charged in the murder, Albert Krieger, his lawyer, says that the government obviously intends to tar Moran with the crime by inference. Yet, Krieger says, it would have been improper for Moran to withhold the information about Lombrano, for it is a lawyer's express obligation to inform his client of all potential witnesses in order to prepare an adequate defense. "On what basis does the lawyer come to the conclusion that a witness is going to be killed?" Krieger says. "The bad reputation of his client as fostered by law enforcement?"



In addition, many defense attorneys say they are perplexed by the government's theory of money laundering in the case. While agreeing that it is illegal to knowingly transfer dirty money, members of the Miami bar say they never thought there was anything wrong with passing along part of a fee to another attorney. Yet this is the money-laundering charge to which Joel Rosenthal has pleaded guilty. Prosecutors explain that Rosenthal, in their view, was not performing a legitimate legal service but was merely brokering the money.

In any event, government agents appear highly confident of winning. The prosecution's case has already successfully met some strong challenges. Last year, a federal judge was presented with some of the evidence that had been gathered against the six lawyers, and he granted search warrants on the offices of them all—a most unusual procedure, given the traditional privilege of confidentiality between lawyer and client. The Miami bar was outraged. "Do you know what happens in these searches?" Roy Black, Abbell's lawyer, says. "Ten or fifteen strangers come in and make you sit somewhere while they rummage through your files, notes, calendars, and letters. Then they take most of it. It's like being burglarized."

An even bigger challenge to the Miami prosecutors was getting Justice Department officials in Washington to approve the indictment. Attorney General Janet Reno was not involved in the review process, perhaps because she is personally acquainted with several of the accused lawyers. Her deputy, Jamie Gorelick, was closely involved, however. Attorneys for the accused made the trip up to Washington, and argued vehemently against the indictment, and, though they ultimately did not prevail, the review process dragged on for a long time. Much too long, in the opinion of customs agents who had worked on the case, and had expected the indictment to be unsealed in February. Justice was apparently nervous about the scope of the charges against the lawyers, and needed further reassurance about the quality of the evidence, because of problems that had occurred in another case with some striking similarities.

Earlier this year, L. Anthony White, a federal prosecutor in Reno, Nevada, tried to persuade a jury that Patrick Hallinan, a San Francisco lawyer, had acted as house counsel to a marijuana-smuggling ring, and was therefore himself guilty of large-scale drug trafficking. The hundred-page racketeering indictment filed against Hallinan accused him of numerous acts of money laundering and obstruction, including trying to prevent arrested ring members from coöperating with the government. As his star witness, the prosecutor called Ciro Mancuso, the confessed ringleader, who had been Hallinan's client. The jurors did not like Mancuso or the deal the government had struck with him in return for his testimony, which permitted Mancuso to keep more than five million dollars in cash and real estate, and held the promise of a significant reduction in sentence. In his closing statement John Keker, the lawyer for Hallinan, said, "They'll tell you it's a war on drugs. . . . It's a war against defense attorneys." Hallinan was acquitted after four hours of deliberation—a hugely embarrassing setback for the Justice Department.

Clearly, Justice believed that the Miami case was stronger than the Hallinan case, because the indictment, though it was delayed, arrived intact and powerful. Customs agents remain convinced, however, that the Miami bar, some of whose members are Democratic Party contributors, exerted political pressure on the Justice Department. (Those agents "are full of shit," Moran's attorney, Albert Krieger, says.) And agents are angry that Justice gave the lawyers permission to turn themselves in voluntarily, and that Michael Abbell's arraignment was put off by a day so that he could attend his son's graduation. "If one of us had been indicted on these charges, we'd have been taken out in chains," Bonni Tischler, the newly appointed head of United States Customs in Miami, says.

Last March, apparently in response to pressure from the State Department, the Colombian authorities began to crack down on the Cali cartel, and in the past two months Gilberto Rodríguez and José Santacruz, both of whom are named in the Miami indictment, have been arrested. (They are unlikely to be extradited.) Miguel Rodríguez, also a defendant in the Miami case, is said to be on the run.

Yet even if the Cali cartel is ultimately dismantled, the war on drugs will continue. So will the debate over the tactics employed by the government to fight that war. Defense attorneys complain that the Fourth Amendment protection against unreasonable searches and seizures has become almost nonexistent in drug cases. They question the constitutionality of the government's practice of issuing subpoenas to lawyers in drug cases for information about the payment of legal fees—information that might be used to incriminate the lawyers' own clients. Gerard E. Lynch, a law professor at Columbia University, who served as chief of the criminal division of the Manhattan United States Attorney's Office, and has also done criminal-defense work, concurs. "The Constitution has definitely taken a beating in the drug war," he says.

Lynch believes the Miami case may intimidate good, aggressive attorneys and deter them from representing drug defendants. He even believes that that may have been part of the government's design. But he is not prepared to say that prosecutors were wrong to bring the case; that judgment will depend on the quality of the evidence presented at the trial, which is expected to begin next year. "There is absolutely no reason why a lawyer can't be guilty of conspiring with a drug enterprise," he says. "And it would be foolish for the government to close its eyes to the fact that there are a lot of corrupt lawyers out there." ♦

PERSONAL HISTORY

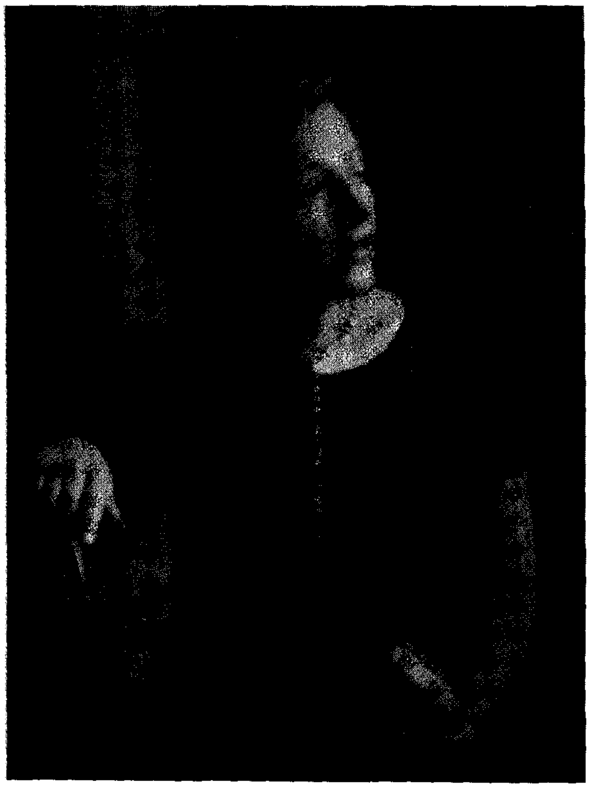
I SAY THIS

One woman without a husband and another trying to get rid of one take the stage in an African village.

BY EMILY HAHN

It was a long time ago.

Most of my anecdotes, it occurs to me now, start with that sentence, and usually it is superfluous. Who cares, after all, at what time in my life it happened? The tale's the thing. Still, for some anecdotes, like this one, the time matters: many things that were true in the Belgian Congo then are not true now. For one thing, it isn't Belgian anymore, nor is it even the Congo, that name having been adopted by another, smaller country. What was my Congo has been renamed, by her own people, Zaire. Also, the status I am remembering, of the women of the Congo—or, rather, Zaire—may well have changed completely, though somehow I doubt it. Changing the name of a country is simpler than changing the way its women are treated. In the old days, if I had said to a Congolese woman that she might be able to improve her lot she would have replied with the Kingwana word denoting skepticism: "*Wapi!*"—which in English would be "Sez you!" And very likely she would have gone on with whatever I had interrupted, scrubbing something, her back bent whether or not she was carrying a baby. Incidentally, those women carry and nurse their babies much longer than we do. At the stage when we are promoting our young from pram to stroller, they are still slinging their babies from back to hip and letting them suckle from Mother's skinny, pendulous breast.



Emily Hahn in the thirties. "I sat down on the judgment seat. What the hell? It was only a bad dream."

DORIS UMANN

In that far-off time, I was taking a long trip on foot toward the east coast, because that was the way one had to travel in the forest. There were no roads yet through the trees; there was just a system of pathways that were—at least, half of them—elephant tracks. Apart from my head boy, Shabani, I needed a guide to figure them out. Mine was a Pygmy, whose people, of course, knew all the ways of elephants. You could always rely on a Pygmy.

I was heading for the coast of Tanganyika, on my way back home to either England or America: because of the Depression, I was unsure which. But what was certain was that I still had a long way to go. Ten bearers, as they were called, carried my belongings, which were carefully limited, considered, and spaced out, because, according to local law, each bearer carried at the most thirty pounds. For food we had plantains, rice when we could get it, tea leaves, and sugar. We bought chickens (*kuku*, as they were

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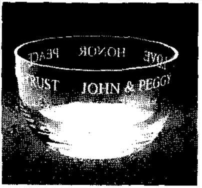

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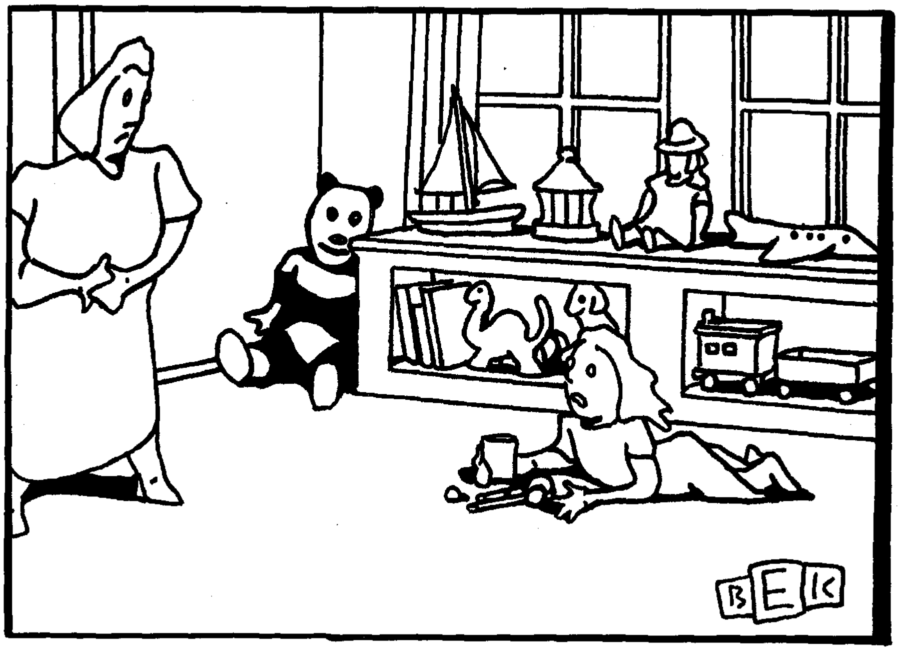

"I have so much I want to express, but when I try to put it into Play-Doh it never comes out right."

• •

called) on the way whenever we could. The men carried them live but upside down until they were needed, and I had long got over being squeamish about it. On earlier trips, I had added to this Spartan diet canned goods such as butter and meat. But the cans were heavy and costly, and once they were opened the stuff inside quickly spoiled, so I did without such refinements. In camping, I practiced a similar frugality, ignoring the ordinary white man's example of carrying a tent for the night's shelter, a bathtub, and a metal cot. Instead, I had a light bamboo-frame bed and no bathtub. What, I asked myself, are rivers for? Rivers without crocodiles, naturally. As for shelter, the bearers and I planned each day's walk so that we would arrive, at more or less the right time of day, at a village where I could rent a hut for the night for a few francs, and the bearers would share a fire with village friends. Underfoot, a hut was not always clean, but an important piece of my luggage was a roll of native mats, to keep my feet safe from chiggers. With the addition of a bowl and a pail, I felt as well outfitted as I would have been in a rest house. There were no rest houses in the forest anyway.

OUR arrival at a village followed a pattern set by travelling government officials. The party approached, to the music of the bearers, who always chanted, claiming that their work seemed easier if they sang; they made up the words as they went along. At the head marched the official, in his sun helmet and khaki shorts and shirt. According to the rules of etiquette, he was to be met by the village headman—or, as he was called, the *capita*—who would make polite noises and tell the official's head boy where to pitch his tent and so on. My party's arrival was not much different when it came to marching in, with me at the head, but then the *capita* always hesitated, looked around, and asked, "Where is your master, Madamu?" I should explain that in Kingwana the word for "master" is the same as that for "husband," and, as things went in that society, it was a logical connection. But I never got used to it; it always irritated me. Still, I replied as politely as I could, "I have no husband"—or, truthfully, within the limits of the language, "I have no master." As usual, then, the *capita* and I looked at the huts and selected a likely one, and the bearers found their friends and inquired where they would be sitting around the fire after chaffering for chickens. At the fire, they would talk late into the night before rolling up in their blankets to sleep.

We had walked for four or five days before we reached this particular village, and we were unusually tired, because our way had not been the customary one—through trees along damp, slippery paths. Instead, we had soon had to climb a lot, and the first couple of days of easy travel had spoiled us. So I was more sensitive than usual when the *capita* asked the inevitable question about my master, and my tetchy reaction possibly dismayed the poor innocent man. However, for a while things went along according to schedule, with the bearers bringing my belongings into the hut and everybody settling down. Soon afterward, though, I noticed something unusual going on near the hut. It had a path of well-trodden earth in front of it, with shade supplied by a bit of roofing sticking out in front. But not until local men brought out a table and set it down on the trodden patch did I realize the truth, that the village was getting ready for a *baraza.* I was appalled. A *baraza* (the etymology of the word is obscure: could it be derived from "bazaar"?) was a calling together of people—male, of course—for disputation and, if possible, settlement of some knotty affair. It was a sort of colloquy of all those who mattered, and it was held whenever the people could get hold of a personage of authority to head the proceedings.

Everyone I met in the Congo was great on disputation—the men, I mean. I can still call up in memory the sound of those beautiful voices raised in public argument—flowing, expressive, often passionate. Women's voices were not heard among them, though the women had plenty to say on their own topics. They would complain among themselves, discussing children and such matters, but the sound was more ordinary, neither glib nor musical. They just didn't have the time to orate.

No, this *baraza* was almost certain to be a man's affair—except, I feared, for me. A hasty conversation with Shabani confirmed my fears. Meanwhile, the *capita* had ordered a chair to be brought and set up behind the table, obviously to serve as a judgment seat. It was my own fault, I realized, for travelling without a master. I had unsexed myself. Because I was a white woman travelling alone, of course I was fit to chair a *baraza.* Besides, so Shabani had told me, the village badly needed a *baraza* to settle some sort of woman trouble, which he did not understand very well. So, just at the right time, here I was, having arrived with a retinue and all that pomp. I defy any white woman to have chickened out and refused to take that chair, which the *capita* was now holding politely, inflexibly. I sat down in it. What the hell? It was only a bad dream, after all.

All around the chair and me stood the village men, bright-eyed and ready for the excitement. The two leaders of the argument were easy to place. They seemed about the same age—mid-thirties, perhaps—and both were eager, like dogs straining at the leash. Well, no, they weren't, either: dogs don't pout, and these men certainly did. At least, each had a sombre look, as if musing on his own grievance—a normal sort of emotion, I supposed, in the circumstances.

Shabani stood next to me, ready to translate any hard parts. The proceedings were opened by another man—a sort of stage manager, I thought. He called on the aggrieved husband to say his piece, and in the meantime I looked around for the woman who was the cause of all this. I didn't see her, however.

The husband (plaintiff?) started with the usual sentence, which I understood; it meant "I say this." What he had to say—in a great outpouring, flowery and aggrieved—was this: He had had a wife, a young woman properly paid for, and she had deserted him. He wanted either her or the bride price back. This, though not put as starkly as I have rendered it, was the burden of his complaint, and I felt that the sentiment of the crowd was with him. Certainly Shabani was. I paid more attention to the bride price, which the deserted husband carefully itemized: two sheep, a pirogue, and ten chickens, including a laying hen. It did sound rather a lot, I had to admit. Shabani thought so, too. I thought for a minute that he would whistle, but that's not a Kingwana gesture. Well, naturally the bridegroom wanted that fortune back, but it seemed that the bride's father couldn't see things that way. If a man couldn't keep a woman, he said, that was his bad management, his bad luck.

The argument went on and on, the bride's father taking her side, the groom's family making snide remarks to encourage him. It became, finally, unpleasantly noisy. But I found myself taking sides. I was curious, too. Where was she, this Helen of the Congo woodlands? After a bit more haranguing, I remembered that I had certain powers.

"Tell them to bring out the woman," I directed Shabani. He did so, and she appeared—young, shrinking slightly at the publicity, but defiant.

I asked, for I knew that much Kingwana, "Why did you run away?"

"I don't like him," she replied.

I suppose I was the only person to whom this seemed a rational argument. At least, everybody else looked puzzled, but that look didn't last long. After all, they seemed to conclude, it figured: though white, I, too, was a woman.

I realized that I had lost my public's sympathy, so I turned to the bride's father and asked, "Is it true that he gave you all that wealth?"

Well, yes, he admitted, but it wasn't his fault if the man couldn't hold on to his woman. To pay him back was impossible. Hadn't he kept his side of the bargain?

The bargain, the wife, stood there, silent but still rebellious. In fact, everybody stood there, waiting.

Then I had an inspiration, which lent power to my tongue. I found enough words to say to the husband, "I say this. What good is this woman to you? Get her back and she will only run away again, isn't it true?"

"Yes," said the husband and, after him, the crowd. "Yes, it's true," they buzzed, as if it were a new and surprising thought.

"So I say this," I went on. "Make friends again with her father, and he will try as time goes on to pay you back. Won't you?" I added to the father.

"I'll try, Madamu," the father said.

"Then talk it over between you, and settle something now," I directed.

Wonder of wonders, they accepted the judgment. I heard them haggling as I went into the hut, and I heard the bearers and their friends talking after I went to bed. However, I didn't really sleep well. I kept thinking of that defiant girl: I had done the best I could for her, but it wasn't enough.

Sometime during the troubled night, I remembered a Swahili maxim: "Woman is wealth, and wealth is woman."

I thought of being able to tell the girl to take heart. "Someday, you will find things easier," I might say. "Someday, you will have power to decide for yourself about everything."

But in my imagination she replied only "*Wapi.*" ♦

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LETTER FROM HIROSHIMA

DID THE BOMB END THE WAR?

If there had been no bomb and no annihilation of Hiroshima, would Japan have waged a final suicidal defense at the cost of a million more American lives? That was Washington's assertion. The writer reconstructs the options that both governments secretly considered in the weeks leading up to surrender.

BY MURRAY SAYLE

I—A CEREMONY

The city remembers its worst day.

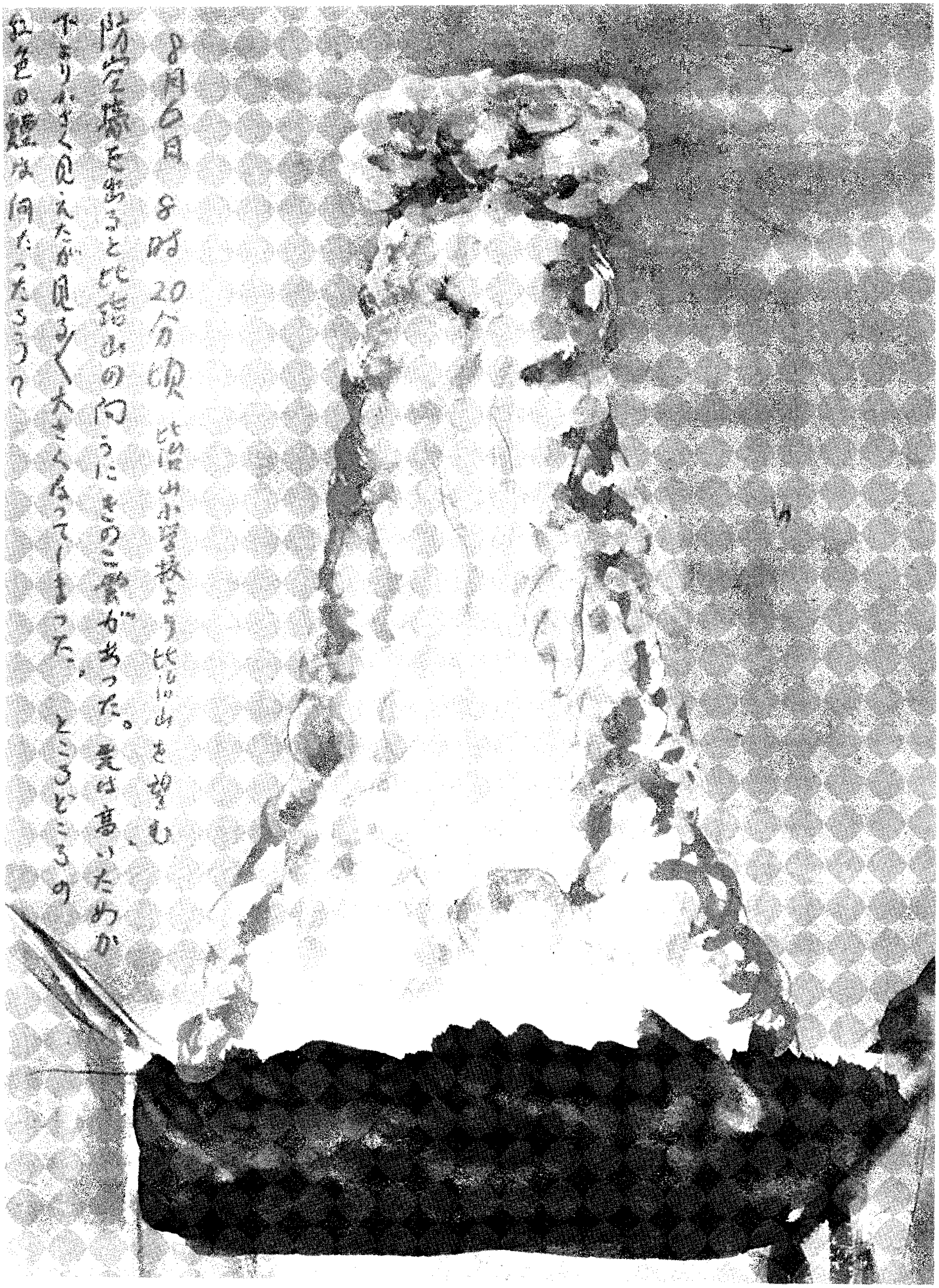
At exactly fifteen minutes past eight in the morning, Japanese time, on August 6th last year—the moment when, almost half a century ago, an atomic bomb exploded over the city of Hiroshima—a single bong of the Peace Bell signalled a minute's silence. Mayor Takashi Hiraoka and other Japanese dignitaries made short speeches, followed by the flight of a thousand doves, which rose in a whirring cloud above our heads, circled the Memorial Cenotaph, the centerpiece of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, and fluttered into nearby trees, to resume their everyday role as the park's resident pigeons. I have been coming to Hiroshima for twenty years. At first, I came out of simple curiosity: for my generation, children of the Second World War, the stunning news of the atomic bombs and, a few days later, the coming of peace will always be linked. Once, like everyone else, I thought that the atomic bombs had caused the surrender, ended the war, and saved many lives. Now I know that they did not. I began to doubt the official story on my first visit to Hiroshima. In the years since, I have been back many times, have read scores of books on the subject and talked with their authors, have discussed Hiroshima with everyone from my Japanese neighbors (we live in a small village near Tokyo) to officials of the Emperor's court, and have consulted the archives in Washington and Tokyo; and I have concuded that the debate over Hiroshima has been totally misconceived. To recover our moral bearings, we must examine anew the circumstances surrounding the dropping of the bomb and the Japanese surrender.

To the residents of Hiroshima, their history is a part of everyday life. Anyone connected with the bomb—the attendants in the Peace Memorial Museum, for instance; the gardeners who catch the park's pigeons in big bamboo nets the night before the annual ceremony; and the sellers of A-Bomb Dome paperweights, history books, and pigeon food—is cheerfully said to be in the *pikadon shōbai*, the "flash-bang game." Rebuilt Hiroshima has the cozy neighborliness of any provincial Japanese city, and its people gossip about things far less earthshaking than atomic bombs: the fortunes of the Hiroshima Carp, the home-town baseball team; the slowdown in the biggest local industry, the Mazda car plant, due to the ever-soaring yen; and the year's crop of Hiroshima oysters from the nearby Inland Sea, reckoned by gourmets to be the best in Japan. But these are not what draw a million-plus visitors here every year.

Hiroshima means "wide island," and the name well describes the city's site—on six low islands that are divided by seven branches of the Ota River delta and in few spots rise more than fifteen feet above water level, so offering no protection against an overhead blast. The many branches of the river, all natural firebreaks, were (along with the city's small size and relative unimportance) the main reason that Hiroshima had not already been firebombed, and thus was available as a target for the new weapon. The intimate, human scale of Hiroshima, derived from its setting amid green mountains rising directly from its outskirts, spares it from the usual Japanese urban wilderness of featureless suburbs; but those mountains, the target selectors reckoned, would concentrate both blast and radiation on the densely populated city center, and that is what happened. Right in the city center, like the dot in a bull's-eye, there was, and still is, a conspicuous bridge, shaped like the letter T, visible from five miles up. Colonel Paul Tibbets, the pilot of the Enola Gay, the B-29 that dropped the bomb, called it "the most perfect A.P."—aiming point—"I've seen in this whole damn war." In those days, the residential and business area around the bridge was built mostly of wood. As an A-bomb target, then, Hiroshima was, by ill luck, just about perfect.

Much of what was formerly the crowded city center is now the Peace Memorial Park. The park is set on a long, cleared axis, with the famous A-Bomb Dome—the skeleton of what was once the Industry Promotion Hall—across the river at one end; the cenotaph, sheltered by a kind of stone tent, in the middle; and the Peace Memorial Museum, recently doubled in size, at the other. The museum displays something of Hiroshima's past as a port of embarkation—an Oriental version of Oakland, California—for Japan's wars: against China, in 1894-95; against Russia, in 1904-05; and against the Allies in the early part of the Second World War. It also displays a full-size model of the atomic bomb—an ugly black cylinder about twelve feet long—and relics and memorabilia of the atomic

The paintings accompanying this piece are by survivors of Hiroshima. Opposite: "I could see the mushroom cloud beyond the mountain. . . . The top of the cloud was narrower than the bottom, but it was getting bigger as I watched. What was the red smoke that appeared here and there?"—Hidehiko Okazaki.



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"Everything's so easy for you, Mr. Perfect."

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attack: pots and pans melted by fire; the shadow left by a rare Japanese idler, vaporized as he lounged on the stone steps of a bank that never opened (the shadow was starting to fade a few years back, but a local artist found a way to preserve it); scraps of school uniforms very like the ones my own children wear to our village school; charred book bags; aluminum lunchboxes of long-dead pupils; rusty rifles; a photocopy of the order, in English, to drop the bomb on a list of target cities, headed by Hiroshima, "as soon as the weather will permit visual bombing after 3 August, 1945"; a blast-crumpled sewing machine; a clock stopped at eight-fifteen; a model of the city with the bomb, shown as a blinking light, hanging over it (material of this kind was to have been displayed in the Smithsonian, but after protests by veterans' groups and others it was left out of the exhibit); and, most poignant of all, a diorama in which a mother and child stagger, ragged, blackened, and bleeding, through a realistic inferno.

This last scene has no caption. Its challenge is wordless: if you defend the atomic bomb, defend this. The diorama was for me when I first saw it a moment of revelation. Despite the omnipresence of the word "peace," there is nothing peaceful about the museum, the dome, or the Peace Park. The place is a cemetery—but not one like Gettysburg, where the dead of both sides are honored. Only one side fell here, unreconciled, its dead still bound together by the angry tribal solidarity of war. The evasive inscription on the cenotaph, composed by a professor at Hiroshima University—"Rest in peace, for the error will not be repeated"—defeats its own purpose. What error? The war? War in general? Pearl Harbor? The bomb? Who made the error? Japan? The United States? Was this a war crime, a military necessity, stern justice, harsh mercy, well-intentioned terror, the last act of a savage conflict? What is the message of the A-Bomb Dome, with a dent in its carefully preserved skeletal roof indicating the point in the sky, almost overhead, where the bomb exploded? The Peace Memorial Museum conspicuously gives no answers, and the exhibit in Washington, now scaled back to little more than part of the fuselage of the B-29 bomber Enola Gay, does not address these questions, either.

No longer does the Hiroshima bomb seem quite the triumph of science that it appeared to be at the time. War has not been abolished; there is no nuclear-enforced peace. Atomic weapons are under only the shakiest of international controls: China just tested one; France plans to resume testing, too. Electricity is not too cheap to meter, as was joyfully forecast; the once bright hopes of nuclear power seem to be dying an appropriately lingering death. Still, the facts are at last coming clear. All but a few of the documents have been declassified, some as recently as a few months ago. The official dead of Hiroshima have now been numbered at 186,940. The figure's precision hints at pious fraud, since it has long been impossible to connect any individual death to the bomb with any certainty, but the order of magnitude is right. Why did so many people have to die?

II—THE PROLOGUE

A child's death by fire alarmed the world.

THE road to Hiroshima began, a clergyman once told me, under an apple tree in the Middle East. A more recent address is the East End of London, England, specifically 33 Cowper Road, Stoke Newington, where, on the night of May 31, 1915, the world's first strategic-bombing campaign claimed its first victim, Elsie Leggatt, aged three, who was killed by a bomb dropped from a German Navy airship, LZ 38; her sister May died a few days later. The German air attacks on England during the First World War, initially by zeppelins, then by primitive airplanes, are now largely forgotten, overshadowed by what came later. In eighty-four raids spread over almost four years, fewer than fourteen hundred civilians were killed, and British war production was mostly unaffected. Just the same, they made a deep impression; a new dimension had been added to war. Military visionaries prophesied that the next war would be fought by heavy bomber fleets smashing enemy cities; the only defense would be to get one's overwhelming blow in first. The doctrine of the knockout blow, first suggested by an Italian general, Giulio Douhet, in 1921, was the essential precursor to Hiroshima; between the two World Wars, it was generally accepted, without any real evidence, that a nation's will to fight could be broken by the right combination of high-explosive and incendiary bombs dropped on its cities. (Douhet added poison gas as well.) The generation that led and fought the Second World War lived under the shadow of the bomber; in its nuclear, ballistic-missile form, we are under it still.

Despite halfhearted attempts between the wars to forge an international agreement that would prohibit the bombing of cities, the knockout blow was tried several times before Hiroshima, with much loss of life but suspiciously little success. Unable to strike at the Axis any other way, in 1942 the British Royal Air Force, under an aggressive new commander, Air Marshal Sir Arthur T. Harris—Bomber Harris to the public, Chopper or Killer to his men—began a campaign of what he termed "area" raids by night against Germany. (The Germans called them "terror" raids.) The same darkness that gave the British bombers some protection against German flak and fighters made it impossible for them to hit any but the biggest targets, like whole towns. Harris made a virtue of necessity, with the argument that "dehousing" the German workers would have much the same effect on their morale and efficiency as destroying war factories, with the difference that crowded working-class districts were easier to hit, and not as heavily defended. Harris's raids led the British military theorist Basil Liddell Hart to a tart comment:

> It will be ironical if the defenders of civilisation depend for victory upon the most barbaric, and unskilled, way of winning a war that the modern world has seen.

But Liddell Hart wrote this only for his diary. The people of Britain and its new ally, the United States, approved, and called for many more such raids.

Harris obliged with radically new tactics. By mid-1943, the Royal Air Force had made two breakthroughs in the world's first electronic war: a system for blinding radar defenses by dropping strips of aluminum foil, called Window; and a primitive airborne radar, H2S, that painted a crude picture of the terrain below. Hamburg, the second-largest city in Germany, was selected to try them out. Hamburg had many genuine military targets—aircraft factories, U-boat construction yards, and other war industries. By a trick of geography, these were all situated on canals on the southern side of the River Elbe. Hamburg's million and a half citizens lived for the most part in residential districts on the north side. Harris chose the north side for his experiment.

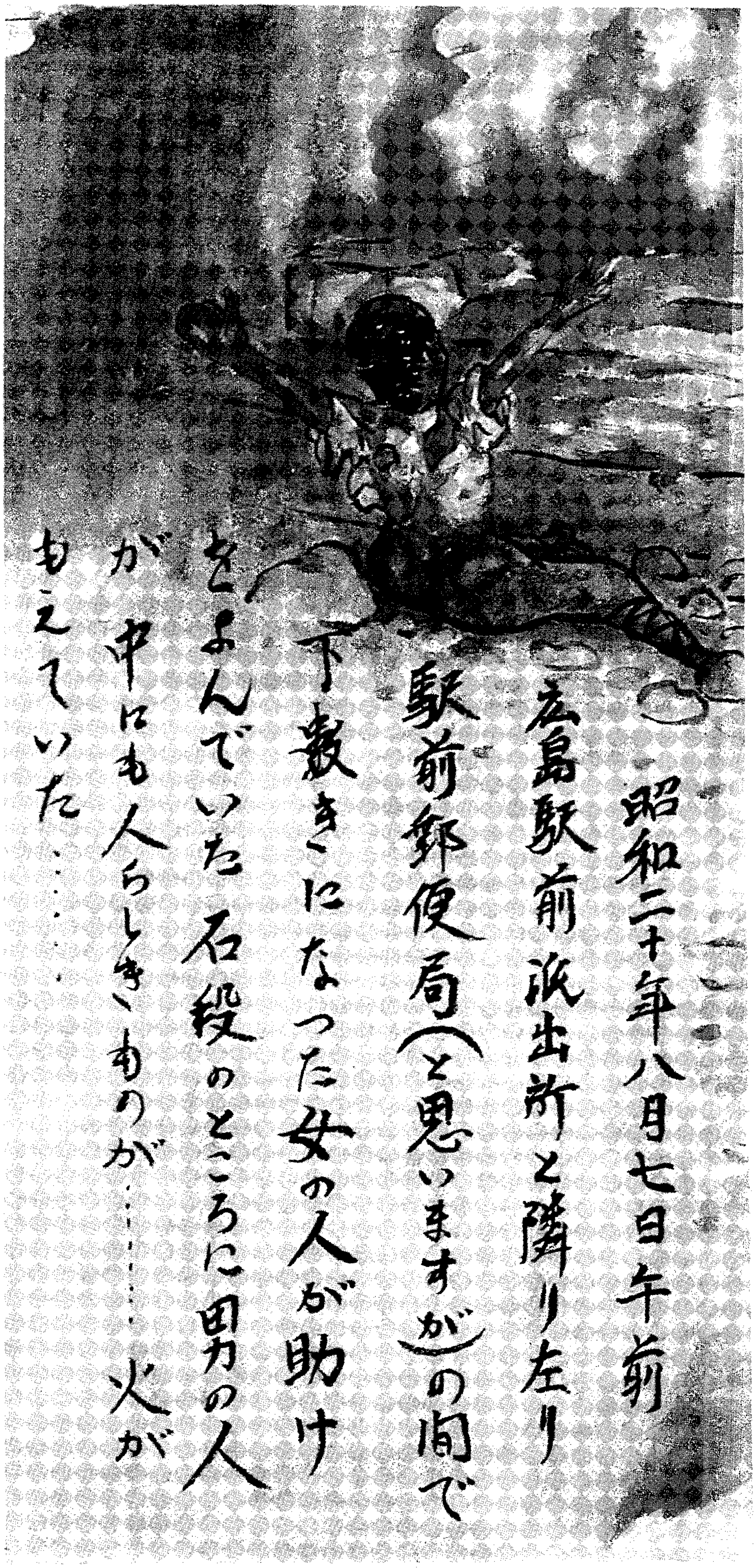
Just after midnight on July 25, 1943, the R.A.F. attacked with seven hundred and twenty-eight aircraft, showering the city with a mixture of high-explosive bombs, weighing between five hundred and eight thousand pounds, and clusters of incendiaries. The night was hot and dry; pilots saw many small fires linking up into a gigantic blaze. Two daylight raids by B-17s of the United States Eighth Air Force followed, aimed at the waterfront factories. Two nights later, seven hundred and eighty-seven R.A.F. bombers came back to refresh the fires north of the river. This time, Brigadier General Fred L. Anderson, United States Army Air Forces, flew as second pilot on a British bomber, to witness a sight never seen in war before. Below him was, in the words of one witness, "a storm . . . a hurricane . . . a sea of fire." The Hamburg Fire Department's log, describing the scene, added a new word to the vocabulary of war: *Feuersturm*—firestorm. In just over an hour, four square miles of the city—equivalent to all of Lower Manhattan from Madison Square to Battery Park—was a roaring inferno. People in basement shelters heard a tornado howling outside, then saw boiling tar from the roads and lead melted from roofs cascading down the stairs. Hundred-and-fifty-mile-an-hour winds uprooted trees, smashed in doors, and swept fleeing runners off their feet. A few made safety in the waterways; the rest died in the streets or the shelters, as the fire replaced oxygen from the air with poisonous carbon monoxide.

The firestorm is not seen in nature. To achieve the effect, fires need to be started in many places, miles apart. Rising, heated air draws in more air, which soon reaches gale force and links the fires together, killing by asphyxiation, heat, and the collapsing of buildings. As the fire burns inward toward the center, escape becomes all but impossible. Called, in the R.A.F. euphemism of the time, self-energized dislocation—the target provides the fuel, the attacker only the lighter—the firestorm is the most one-sidedly efficient way yet discovered of killing human beings. Hiroshima, still two years away, would be destroyed by a nuclear-ignited firestorm.

Harris next tried to burn down Berlin, in the winter of 1943–44, and failed. It was too big, too spread out, too well defended. The R.A.F. lost a thousand and forty-seven bombers and their crews in the Berlin battle—more than its entire frontline strength when it began. Harris claimed that he could "produce in Germany by April 1st 1944, a state of devastation in which surrender is inevitable," but the date came and went without Germany's capitulation. If strategic air power alone was ever to win a war, the time had come, the air generals reasoned, to try terror, the theorists' knockout blow, "against the morale of the [German] High Command, the army and the civilian population," as Sir Charles Portal, Marshal of the R.A.F., put it. The result was the plan to destroy Dresden. Harris did not originate the idea. An Allied summit was due to meet at Yalta in February of 1945; Churchill called for dramatic proof to convince Stalin that his allies, bogged down in the West, were not leaving everything to him. Roosevelt, tired and ill, went along. Dresden, the "Florence on the Elbe," was a treasure-house of Baroque and rococo art and architecture. The normal population, some six hundred thousand, had been swollen to more than a million by hordes of refugees fleeing a Soviet tank army, reported to be seventy miles away. On the night of February 13, 1945, a force of seven hundred and ninety-six R.A.F. bombers attacked Dresden in two waves, three hours apart, to harass or kill firefighters. The result was history's second major firestorm, stoked up the next day by three hundred and eleven American B-17s—the first such open collaboration by the allied air forces in fire-raiding. Between thirty-five thousand and a hundred thousand died, and possibly many more. Destroying the city did not help the Soviet advance; Hitler still ran his war from Berlin. Dresden confirmed one of the best-attested lessons of the Second World War: military leaders, themselves safe in bunkers, can take enormous civilian casualties without flinching.

Dresden—and the very similar fire raid on Tokyo a month later—also marked the crossing, concealed from the public of the allied nations, of an invisible moral line. Air attacks on factories producing war supplies were generally considered defensible, in a just war. Such factories were usually in or near cities; civilians inevitably suffered. Burning down the houses of the people who worked in such factories was still defensible, if barely so; able-bodied workers would go to air-raid shelters while the raids were in progress. But setting firestorms could have only one result—the mass killing of civilians, with no possibility of escape. Dresden was described as a communications center—as all big cities have to be. But United States Army Air Forces headquarters, in Washington, denied that Dresden marked any change in American bombing policy—which the Rutgers historian William L. O'Neill calls "an outright lie"—while the R.A.F. branded neutral reports that twenty to thirty-five thousand civilians had been killed in Dresden, far less than the real total, as Nazi propaganda. Moral qualms about wiping out whole cities had thus been silently overcome half a year before Hiroshima; the only question left was the ethically less troubling one of the method. With Dresden and downtown Tokyo destroyed by fire, the acceptability of wiping out Hiroshima with an atomic bomb was taken for granted by its makers.

OVER the years since Americans dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it has been suggested—especially in Japan—that the bombs, even if they had been ready in time, would not have been used against Germans. This cannot be proved either


昭和二十年八月七日午前
広島駅前派出所と隣り左り
駅前郵便局（と思いますが）の間で
下敷きになった女の人が助け
をよんでいた石段のところに男の人
が中にも人らしきものが……火が
もえていた……

Right: "By the police box in front of Hiroshima station (I think it was), the post office to the left, was a woman trapped under fallen beams, calling for help."—Shouichi Furukawa.

way. However, given the stirrings of moral doubt about the firebombings in 1944 and 1945—"Are we beasts? Are we taking this too far?" Winston Churchill said, on seeing the result of one raid—the difficulty of finding an undamaged German city after Dresden, and concern about the reaction of Americans of German descent, much more serious thought would have taken place first than was ever accorded to the atomic-bombing of Japan. Nazism was viewed as a thoroughly evil doctrine that held mostly decent, deceived people in bondage. But there was no such thing as a good Japanese; Japanese were all evil beyond redemption. Ernie Pyle, the G.I.s' favorite war correspondent, who was killed by a Japanese machine-gun bullet on the tiny island of Ie on April 18, 1945, wrote:

> In Europe we felt that our enemies, horrible and deadly as they were, were still people. But out here I soon gathered that the Japanese were looked upon as something subhuman or repulsive; the way some people feel about cockroaches or mice.

Resident Japanese aliens and Japanese-Americans alike had been interned, stripped of their property, denied legal rights. The idea that within fifty years a Japanese-American judge would be a household name in America would have seemed pure fantasy.

But, loathsome as they were, the Japanese were also terrifying, like any madmen ready to die for a cause; reasonable people would never have begun a war like theirs in the first place. They also seemed to have superhuman courage. On island after island, the Marines encountered a tenacity in defense that Americans had never before seen in war. Sheltered behind concrete bunkers and barriers of coconut logs, Japanese soldiers worked their machine guns until they died or were burned out by flamethrowers. They rarely surrendered, and then only in ones or twos, usually wounded. How, then, short of extermination, could they ever be defeated?

In fact, their military prowess was greatly exaggerated. By August of 1943, Japan had begun the long retreat from its sensational early victories against a poorly prepared United States and the ramshackle empires of the European colonial powers. Barely six months after the United States entered the war, four of the six aircraft carriers that Japan had sent against Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, were sunk at Midway, and they could not be replaced. By mid-1943, Guadalcanal, the first strong point of Japan's outer defense perimeter, had fallen to American Marines; Tarawa, in the Gilbert Islands, was next. But these places were far from Japan, the United States, or anywhere else, and were hard to find on a map. An American naval blockade had already drastically impaired Japan's ability to import oil it needed for the war; by April of 1945, the flow of oil would be cut off completely. Japan's eventual fate was sealed. Why did they fight on? Simple patriotism as Americans understood it seemed inadequate to explain what was usually described as the "fanatical courage" of individual Japanese, so attention turned to their military code, Bushido—literally, "the way of the gentry of the sword."

Bushido was the code of the Japanese samurai, the warrior caste that dominated Japan during its three and a half centuries of seclusion—a time, it should be noted, of all but unbroken peace. Bushido has points in common with the outlook of all military élites—and, for that matter, with the United States military's Code of Conduct—calling for obedience to orders, loyalty to comrades, death before dishonorable surrender. But it has many specifically Japanese elements. Bushido is not a realistic program for achieving victory at the lowest cost; it is a romantic cult of failure and death. Because it was the code of a self-conscious, arrogant minority, Bushido was not for the ordinary man, just as Nazism was not for every German. But enough Japanese were ready to die, freely or under manipulated moral pressure, to make them fearsome enemies.

How did Emperor Hirohito fit into this alarming pattern? His role, poorly understood even by most Japanese, baffled all but a few Americans. The Japanese monarchy had, and still has, a religious basis, nothing to do with war or the military caste. Hirohito himself was not a samurai, and did not share their ideals or their cult of death, any more than the common people did. Under Japan's constitution of 1889, which was current in the war years, the Emperor was a figurehead monarch, not concerned with day-to-day politics. The same constitution, however, made him Commander-in-Chief—the supreme warlord, in theory, to whom every Japanese samurai-soldier owed obedience. Hirohito's "right of command" meant, in reality, the right of the military high command to issue orders in his name. Having tried to understand the enormous evil of Hitler, Americans could most easily interpret Japan as a branch office of Hitler's dictatorship, with Hirohito as a hereditary, all-powerful Führer—who also wore a small mustache.

Very few Americans knew enough about Japan to see that this reading was wrong. One who did was Joseph Grew, the Ambassador to Tokyo in the nineteen-thirties and subsequently Under-Secretary and Acting Secretary of State. Japanese and Americans who believed that Hirohito would order a fight to the bitter end were wrong, but only in the very last days of the war did a few Americans come to see that Hirohito was *the only man* who could actually prevent a suicidal last stand, and so save many lives. Grew was one of the first.

IN September of 1944, with Germany's defeat near, Prime Minister Winston Churchill met with President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the President's home, in Hyde Park, New York, to confirm their understanding that the British-American monopoly of atomic energy would continue after the war. In the meantime, "when a 'bomb' is finally available, it might perhaps, after mature consideration, be used against the Japanese, who should be warned that this bombardment will be repeated until they surrender." These words occur in an aide-mémoire signed by both leaders—a reminder that the idea might be worth further study. This was not the first time that Japan had been mentioned as a possible nuclear target. As early as May of 1943, a Washington committee had thought about atom-bombing the Japanese fleet in Truk anchorage—a genuine military target. But Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945, before the first bomb was ready for testing; and in the press of events during the last weeks of the war no "mature consideration"—if the Churchillian-sounding adjective means unhurried and well informed—ever took place.

The most ominous question of all—whether the United States really wanted to lead the world down the unposted road to nuclear war—was never seriously discussed by the nation's politicians or the military chiefs of staff. Consciences had callused. Destroying cities had by this time become routine; the atomic bomb was thought of as simply a more powerful explosive for the job.

When Saipan and Tinian, in the Mariana Islands, fell to an American assault in June of 1944—an assault that was dismayingly costly in terms of American lives—Tokyo and Japan's industrial belt on the Pacific coast came within B-29 range. But the results continued to be disappointing. When the B-29s flew high enough to avoid the Japanese flak and fighter defenses, they met a new and mysterious hazard, winds up to two hundred miles an hour (later to be called the jet stream), and overshot orthodox targets like aircraft factories and steel mills. Of the seventy-two bombers that attacked Nagoya in December of 1944, half failed to return.

In January of 1945, a new operational commander, Major General Curtis LeMay, a keen student of British bombing methods, who had commanded the third division of the Eighth Air Force in Europe, took command of the strategic bombing of Japan. He introduced new tactics. Simply put, the XXI Bomber Command took over British techniques and, with them, British justifications, or rationalizations, for burning down entire cities. Tests on Japanese wood-and-paper houses, mocked-up in Utah, showed how well they would burn. LeMay ordered his B-29s prepared for incendiary raids in the style of the R.A.F. Guns and ammunition were left behind, to make possible the delivery of six-ton loads of incendiaries. The B-29s were, for the first time, to fly by night, in a loose stream, finding their targets individually and bombing from an altitude of five to seven thousand feet, instead of the previous twenty-five to thirty thousand.

III—THE GREAT FIRE

Tokyo suffers the worst disaster of the war.

THE first of the new-style attacks was delivered against downtown Tokyo, the most densely populated area in Japan, on the night of March 9-10, 1945. Three hundred and twenty-five B-29s were dispatched, with orders to bomb the general area between the Sumida and Ara Rivers—the oldest part of Tokyo. Airmen later joked that General Thomas Power, circling high overhead in the lead B-29, wore out a red pencil marking crosses on his map as the fires began. Within thirty minutes, the fires had joined into a sixteen-square-mile inferno, and its updraft tossed the big bombers around like paper airplanes. Their crews could smell burning flesh. The firestorm overwhelmed the primitive Japanese civil defenses—buckets of sand, shovels, and foot pumps. Most of the people in the target area were incinerated or suffocated. The next morning, the rivers were choked with bodies. The Tokyo police counted an implausibly precise eighty-three thousand seven hundred and eighty-three dead; the generally accepted figure is upward of a hundred thousand. General Power claimed after the war, "It was the greatest single disaster incurred by any enemy in military history. It was greater than the combined damage of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. There were more casualties than in any other military action in the history of the world." He may not have been exaggerating. "Properly kindled, Japanese cities will burn like autumn leaves," *Time* reported.

Mass death apart, what was achieved? Downtown Tokyo undoubtedly was an industrial area of sorts, as it is today. Japanese manufacturers have always relied on workers with tiny back-yard factories and home workshops for many of their simpler components. But these small producers are easily replaced, and to put them all out of action would have taken the destruction of every city in Japan. Encouraged by his boss, the veteran chief of staff of the Army Air Forces, General Henry (Hap) Arnold, in Washington ("Congratulations . . . your crews have got the guts for anything"), LeMay energetically carried on the work.

Missions against Japan had become safer than training flights back in the United States, LeMay later reported. Eventually, of Japan's sixty-six biggest cities, fifty-nine had been mostly de-

ESPRESSO
LATTE
MACCHIATO

"Who's taking my order—the committee of the whole, or is there a liaison for decaf?"

stroyed, and the seven others partly destroyed; a hundred and seventy-eight square miles of congested wooden houses had been burned out; upward of half a million Japanese civilians had been killed; more than twenty million were homeless. By the summer of 1945, only two Japanese cities with populations of more than a quarter of a million had not been firebombed—Kyoto and, for reasons given only to General LeMay, and to no one else in his command (knowledge, he later said, that stopped him from leading raids on Japan in person), Hiroshima. Defiantly, Japan fought on.

The firebomb campaign destroyed some forty per cent of all urban housing in Japan. LeMay later claimed that his bombers alone might have brought Japan to surrender, but he conceded that he could offer no hard evidence—an echo of repeated claims made in Europe by Air Marshal "Bomber" Harris. In Japan, the national character has been offered as one explanation for Japan's perseverance. The country has a long history of natural disasters, stoically endured. Some hundred and forty thousand people were killed in the Tokyo-Yokohama earthquake of 1923, only a generation before the war; the memorial to the great fire raid is a simple annex to a shrine recalling the great earthquake.

But Japanese—and German and British—stoicism cannot be the complete explanation. There is something wrong with the theory of strategic bombing itself—particularly in the form of the knockout blow—which seems to rest on confusion about the meaning of "lowering morale." Bereavement, hunger, and homelessness depressed Japanese civilians, of course, as they would anyone. A handful of intellectuals began whispering about peace, in private, and some were arrested, but low spirits generally turned to anger, not against the Japanese government—as the theory predicted—but against the cruel enemy and his devilish bombers.

THE DARK HOLE

Douglass the third is three.
He is digging a hole in the sand on the beach at Nags Head.
Nearby is Kitty Hawk, where our first plane
flew for a few hundred yards.
Another name is in the air: Hiroshima,
a bomb dropping. It sounds like the ocean wind;
but the voices are strange, triumphant and horrified.
He has no words yet for this mixture of tones.
"Does this mean the war has ended?" he asks.
"Yes." "Who won?"
"We did," his mother tells him. "We have the bomb."

Days later his mother is ironing.
She asks him, "Will you go up to the dark hole
and bring me three coat hangers?
They're in a box at the door."
The dark hole is their name for the windowless attic.
Douglass asks, "Do I have to go?"
"No, but you always like to be helpful."
"I'll go," he says.

Twenty years later they both recall the incident.
"When you said we had the atomic bomb," he tells her,
"I thought you meant our family did.
I thought it must be in the dark hole."
He had thought at first it must all be an accident,
like when you dropped something you didn't mean to:
you were ashamed, and sometimes punished.
Fifty years later we still have no words
for the confusion of jubilation and horror,
for the agony of bodies with flesh hanging in tatters
from their shoulder bones;
triumphant, the secret fruit of Oak Ridge
had ripened, falling from a single plane
on an unsuspecting town.
Pity for the three-year-old climbing the stairs
with silent courage
into the terror of catastrophe,
into the dark hole where, yes,
our entire nation owned and kept the fire-wind
of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, the atolls and islands,
the pasturelands of Utah, other remote and quiet
playing fields of a nonexistent war.

—Virginia Hamilton Adair

OVER the years, dozens of Hiroshima and Nagasaki survivors have told me the same thing: even after the atomic bombs, they were ready to endure whatever had to be endured at the command of Emperor Hirohito, who was, they believed, directing Japan's war in person. How Hirohito actually viewed its opening move at Pearl Harbor is, like much about that tight-lipped monarch, not precisely known. Years later, however, his postwar Grand Chamberlain and confidant, Sukemasa Irie, told me that the Emperor considered America's terms for lifting the embargo on shipments of oil—Japan had to get out of both Indochina *and* China—"too severe." On being told about plans for a surprise attack on the American fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hirohito proposed that the Americans be given some warning. Since warnings tend to take the surprise out of surprise attacks, all that the military would agree to was breaking off diplomatic relations thirty minutes before the attack. In any event, the cipher clerks in the Japanese Embassy in

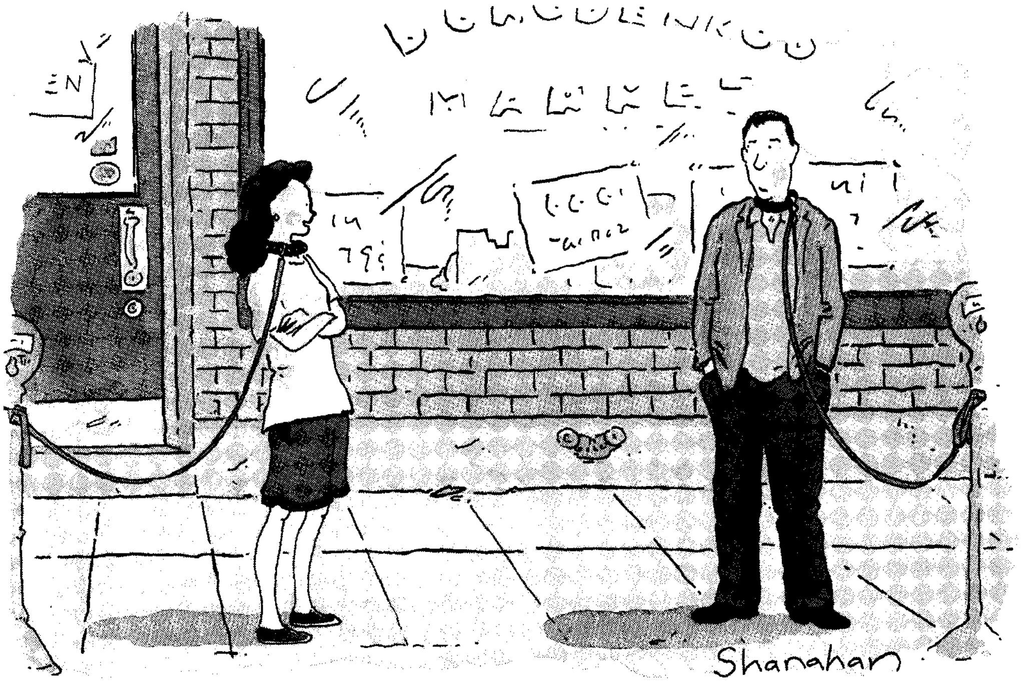
Washington had trouble with the coded message from Tokyo, so the vague non-warning was delivered far too late.

Whether or not Hirohito was a closet pacifist on the eve of Pearl Harbor—probably not—he certainly became one, as Japan's never very rational hopes of victory faded. Japan still looked to Americans to be self-confident and supremely united—"a hundred million people with one heart," as Japanese propaganda broadcasts claimed. The real situation in Tokyo was very different. A peace party was tentatively forming as early as 1943, headed by no less a personage than Emperor Hirohito himself, universally seen by Americans—and by almost all Japanese as well—as a near-sighted, implacable warlord, still dreaming of world conquest. Hirohito could not, however, simply call off the war. Guided by the military, the Japanese nation was gripped by a solid official consensus to fight to the bitter end. Hirohito was not part of it, but the convention around his throne let him speak his mind with relative freedom to only one other person: a court official, Marquis Koichi Kido, Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, a title that in practice translates less ornately as "household minister." Hirohito's real role was, like that of the British monarch, to track the day-to-day political process from an aloof distance, intervening only if it threatened to break down. For this, he needed inside information; his collector of political intelligence, and exerter of discreet influence, was Kido, a former education minister and the grandson of one of the founders of modern Japan. Kido kept a diary, and it, with other sources, lets us follow what happened.

As early as March of 1943, two months after the fall of Guadalcanal, Kido recorded an "unusually long" audience with Hirohito in which he warned the monarch that domestic Communism might flourish if the war went on. By January of 1944, Kido had developed a clear view—but only in his diary—of the future course of events; Japan should sue for peace, he wrote, while there was still time to stave off disaster; the initiative "should not coincide with the collapse of Germany," but should begin "prior to the time that the United States, Great Britain, and the U.S.S.R. unite in their hostility against Japan." In April of 1944, Japan launched its last offensive, Operation Ichigō (Priority), aimed at the final conquest of China, the war's original objective. Half a million troops attacked on a thousand-mile front; but Ichigō eventually petered out in China's crowded, endless distances. When Saipan fell, in June of 1944, the Cabinet of Prime Minister and General Hideki Tojo, who had launched the war with America, resigned. Japan had plainly lost its reckless gamble; the end was only a matter of time.

American observers expected that the new Prime Minister would put out feelers for peace. They reckoned without the labyrinthine, leisurely methods by which Japanese make and modify a national consensus—a process that still mystifies the rest of the world. The next Prime Minister was Kuniaki Koiso, governer-general of Japanese-occupied Korea. A serving lieutenant-general, Koiso was not about to recommend peace negotiations until the Japanese Army had won a last battle. The most favorable battlefield, the army planners claimed, would be the Japanese homeland itself. If Japan won the decisive battle, or lost it while inflicting many Allied casualties, they argued, the minimum condition for peace with military honor, preserving the throne of their Commander-in-Chief, Hirohito, might be achieved. What was essentially the Army's own interest was presented as patriotic loyalty to the throne—a self-serving maneuver that only Hirohito himself could defeat. The paradox baffled American analysts. An estimate prepared by the Office of Strategic Services, forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency, in September of 1944, concluded, "The war will continue until the emperor says 'Cease!' " But no one in America could imagine how the Emperor, if he was indeed the captive of military "extremist groups," could possibly break free and say the magic word.

Meanwhile, the war went on. On February 4, 1945, President Roosevelt, Premier Joseph Stalin, and Prime Minister Churchill met at Yalta, on the Black Sea, to decide the future of Germany, which was tottering toward defeat, and for some haggling (between F.D.R. and Stalin, with Churchill excluded) over Stalin's price for joining the war against Japan and thus tying up Japanese troops. Stalin's asking price was high: the Kuril Islands, ports in China, rights on the railways linking the Trans-Siberian with the Chinese ports. In return, he agreed to enter the war against Japan within three months after the defeat of Germany. By mid-1945, Japanese ships had been driven off the high seas, and bringing Japanese troops home



"So—how long have you lived in New York?"

from China was impossible. Stalin's help was no longer needed, but he still wanted his triple reward.

IV—SERVICE RIVALRY

Who was going to defeat Japan?

AT this point, with Germany finished, the three American services were vying for the postwar appropriations and prestige that would come with the inevitable victory over the last enemy. The Army hoped that an invasion of Japan would end the war; the Navy, that its blockade and carrier-based air attacks would suffice; the Air Forces, that strategic bombing, by fire and high explosives, would do the trick. The unknown factor, the atomic bomb, was still not ready. Beginning on April 1, 1945, the American noose around Japan tightened again; B-29s began mining the straits between the Japanese islands, choking off the last seaborne supplies, and the United States Army landed on Okinawa, regarded by the Japanese as part of the homeland. Four days later, a retired Japanese admiral, Baron Kantaro Suzuki, became the nation's last wartime Prime Minister. To outsiders, Suzuki seemed a comical choice to lead Japan's last battle: he was seventy-seven and deaf, and walked with a limp—a reminder of four bullet wounds inflicted by ultranationalist Army officers who had tried to overthrow the government in 1936. In Japanese eyes, however, Suzuki's appointment, brokered by Kido, was not so strange. He had been Hirohito's Grand Chamberlain when he was wounded; his loyalty was beyond question. He was military but not Army; as Japan's situation became ever more hopeless, the weakening of Army influence had begun. Above all—and much to the confusion of American analysts, who found the elderly admiral's maneuverings utterly incomprehensible—Suzuki was a master of what the Japanese call *haragei*, or "stomach art": the skill of building, or changing, a consensus by unspoken communication.

The Japanese stomach artist's first priority is to keep his group together and functioning, often by proclaiming the old policy; then, imperceptibly, he introduces a new one. If there is still conflict, it may never be resolved, and any number of contradictory policies may be followed at once, or nothing may happen. If a new consensus emerges from hints and private talks, the master of stomach art graciously pretends to give way and abandons the old one; no one else needs to admit to a change of mind, and face is saved all round. Officially speaking, Japan already had a consensus, which Suzuki endorsed "without hesitation": fighting on to the end by mobilizing for total war. After this was confirmed in writing, the Army named General Korechika Anami, a veteran of the New Guinea fighting, who had once been Hirohito's aide-de-camp, as Minister of War. Further confusing American analysts, Shigenori Togo, the Foreign Affairs Minister at the time of Pearl Harbor, resumed his post, while Prime Minister Suzuki marked the imminent collapse of Germany by reaffirming Japan's improbable "faith in certain victory." From across the Pacific, the consensus for national suicide looked to be unbreakable.

UNLIKE the Soviets and the Americans, the Japanese got no secret information as they played out their lonely endgame in the war. American cryptanalysts had broken the Japanese diplomatic code—the so-called Purple code—and summaries of Japanese diplomatic traffic went every day to top officials in Washington, a group deliberately kept small to protect the source. Later the Japanese operational codes were broken as well. These intercepts were called Ultra, a reference to how secret they were, or Magic, a joke about how they were obtained. The Soviets, on their side, were kept posted on the progress of the American atomic bomb by various spies within the Manhattan Project: Klaus Fuchs, a German scientist with British nationality; Julius and Ethel Rosenberg; and others. But Japan's slender secret resources had long since dried up: they never got a hint, for instance, of the atomic bomb.

Japan's ambassador in Moscow, Naotake Sato, was, however, astute; he sensed that Stalin's neutrality, still guaranteed by treaty, could not be relied on. On May 9th, the day after Germany's defeat, Sato advised Foreign Affairs Minister Togo, in Tokyo, that the Soviet Union might well either join in the fighting or seek to broker a peace with substantial gains for itself—territorial or otherwise. Sato did not, of course, know that Stalin had already agreed to enter the war within three months of Germany's defeat, but the alert Japanese diplomat soon picked up hints. On May 23rd, he informed Togo in Tokyo that Japanese couriers maintaining surveillance on the Trans-Siberian Railroad had counted, in a seven-day span, almost two hundred trains headed east with troops, tanks, trucks, fighter aircraft, field guns, and bridging gear. A Japanese-Soviet crisis of some kind, Sato advised Tokyo the following day, was likely by August.

IN Tokyo, complicated maneuvering was under way, but for what? On May 11, 1945—the same day that an ad-hoc Target Committee of scientists and military men in Los Alamos was selecting the best Japanese target for an atomic bomb—the Tokyo leadership met to consider Japan's options. The discussions, which lasted until the fourteenth, were restricted to the so-called Big Six—the Prime Minister, the Foreign Affairs Minister, the Minister of War, the Minister for the Navy, and the Army and Navy chiefs of staff—without any fanatical young aides or secretaries. The military men were at last ready to listen calmly to alternatives to their idea of a final battle, if there were any, although in public they continued preparations to fight on to the end.

The Army Chief of Staff reported the ominous Soviet troop movement east, and those who attended the meeting decided to seek negotiations with the Soviets, the objectives being (1) to keep the Soviet Union out of the war, (2) to persuade the Soviets to adopt a friendly policy, and (3) to seek Soviet mediation to end the war on terms acceptable to Japan. Noting that the Soviet Union was unlikely to consider "throwing in her lot with a nation tottering on the brink of defeat," Foreign Minister Togo suggested this payoff: the Soviet Union would regain the territories it lost in the Russo-Japanese War; Japan would keep Korea; and southern

NOBUKO TAKAKURA

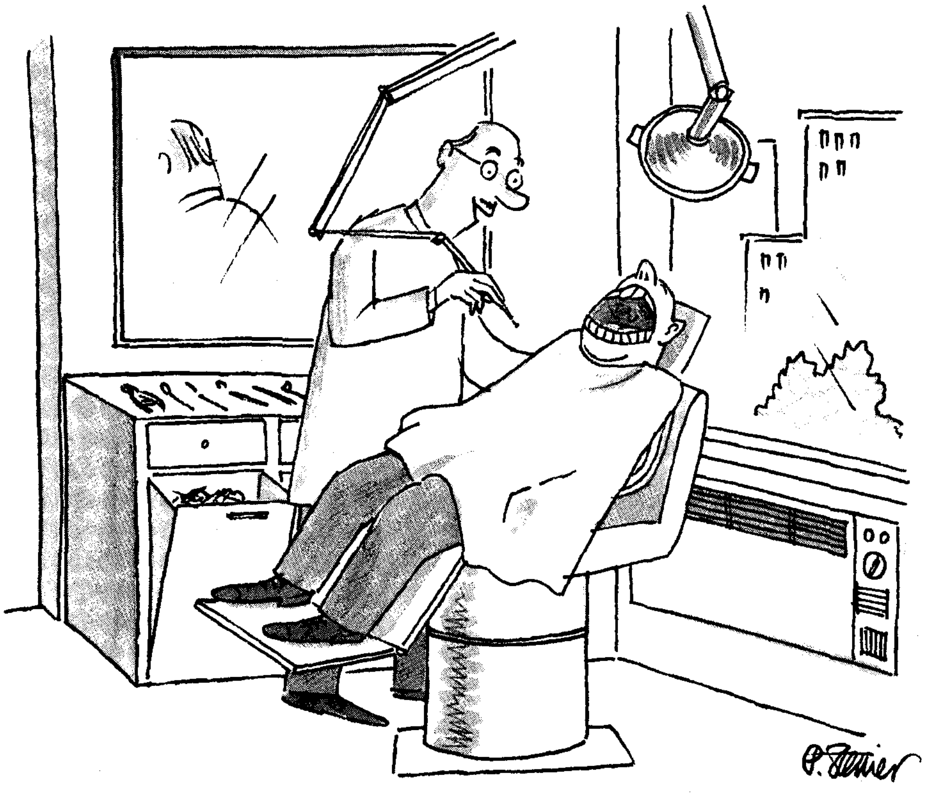
Opposite: Hirohito in 1946. His role in the final stages of the war was essential, and unknown to all but a few Americans.

Manchuria, near the Soviet border, would be neutralized. The proposal was a fantasy—Japan was in no position to reward anyone—but its motivation was flexible enough to get the Army's agreement: Japan's approach to the Soviets was consistent either with fighting the last "decisive battle" and then suing for peace or with ending the war before it could be fought. Ambassador Yakov Malik, in Tokyo, the Soviet official they decided to approach, was noncommittal. Also in Tokyo, meanwhile, the Japanese Army unveiled its plans for the final, decisive battle. Japan's principal weapon was to be a national suicide pact—kamikaze planes, crash boats, human torpedoes, mines, and hand-carried anti-tank bombs.

This "fundamental policy" was formally submitted to Hirohito on June 8th. The Emperor scowled but said nothing. The next day, Suzuki introduced it to Japan's rubber-stamp parliament, and it was approved. Vice-Admiral Takajiro Onishi, the inventor of kamikaze tactics, spoke of twenty million suicide fighters for the final battle—another romantic fantasy. But Emperor Hirohito, Privy Seal Kido, and Foreign Affairs Minister Togo were all doing their best—a muddled, limited best—to see that the last battle was never fought.

While Japan was struggling with its intentions, the battle for Okinawa raged on. The island was invaded on April 1, 1945, and finally secured on June 22nd. In the sense that the stubborn Japanese resistance on Okinawa, without any air cover, resupply, or reinforcements, gave some credibility, on both sides, to the myth of Japan's decisive battle of the homeland, and so kept the war going until the bomb was ready, Okinawa made Hiroshima possible. Some writers have asserted that the Okinawa battle was badly handled by the American side and largely unnecessary, and that all conclusions based on it are suspect. The speculation about the number of American lives that, it is argued, Hiroshima may have saved are all extrapolations from, or interpretations of, the Okinawa casualties, which were heavy on both sides.

On June 22nd, the day Okinawa fell, Hirohito summoned the Big Six generals and politicians to a still standing annex of his burned-out palace and expressed the wish that they "study concrete means" for ending the war. For the first time, the Emperor mentioned peace directly to his military chiefs, but he proposed no terms of settlement—the essential point. Two weeks later, on July 7th, Hirohito suggested that Prime Minister Suzuki send Prince Fumimaro Konoe, a distant imperial relative, who had been the Prime Minister at the time Japan joined the Axis, to Moscow to seek peace terms from America and Britain, using the Soviets as intermediaries. Hirohito instructed Konoe to report directly back to the throne, adding that he himself would favor any peace that Konoe could negotiate. But Moscow, of course, had a more attractive deal on offer elsewhere.



"Of course, the money's good, but it's the teeth that keep me coming back."

Between July 11th and 14th, Foreign Minister Togo, in Tokyo, and Ambassador Sato, in Moscow, exchanged a series of messages, and these were decoded in Washington within hours. The Magic summary of this exchange was not declassified until 1993. Togo now wanted Sato to find out "the extent to which it is possible to make use of Russia in ending the war," without letting the Russians know his intentions. Japan, Togo said in subsequent messages, was ready to give up all territories occupied during the war but was not ready for unconditional surrender. The terms would have to be "virtually equivalent to unconditional surrender," Sato warned, and he added, "Unless we make up our own minds, there is absolutely no point in sounding out the views of the Soviet government." The only useful purpose of sending Konoe to Moscow was "to propose an armistice and peace." In a message of July 18th, however, Sato agreed on the importance of "preserving our national structure"—he meant the monarchy—to save from total destruction the traditional Japanese concept of the nation as an extended family. Soviet Foreign Affairs Commissar Vyacheslav Molotov, Sato reported, was about to leave for Potsdam and was too busy to receive him, Sato. Prince Konoe had not been invited to Moscow, either.

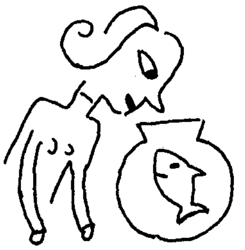
Meanwhile, in Washington, policymakers were equally divided about what terms they wanted for the approaching peace. The United States Navy, eager to take credit for ending the war, believed that a combination of blockade and persuasion could preclude an invasion. On July 7th, Navy Captain Ellis Zacharias, in a broadcast to Japan, began explaining, in fluent Japanese, that "unconditional surrender" was "a technical term which refers to the form in which hostilities are terminated" and recalling the

Atlantic Charter's promise of "the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live"—implying the preservation of the throne, if the Japanese freely chose it. Joseph Grew, who had been United States Ambassador in Tokyo for a decade before the war, and was then Acting Secretary of State, sought to turn the resulting rumors of a change in American war aims into some clarification of them. The Emperor, he argued, was the figurehead but not the source of Japanese militarism. With another State Department expert on Japan, Eugene Dooman, Grew wrote a first draft of what would become the Potsdam Declaration, calling for "the unconditional surrender of all the Japanese armed forces," but clearly leaving open the possibility of "a constitutional monarchy under the present dynasty." The draft warned that "the alternative for Japan is prompt and utter destruction." Conceding that "it was all guesswork," Grew showed his draft to Truman, and the President wanted it put on the agenda for the forthcoming Potsdam conference. A number of Administration officials—especially Secretary of War Henry Stimson and his assistants in the War Department—also found Grew's suggestion compelling. But by the time of the Potsdam conference, James F. Byrnes, Roosevelt's "assistant President," who had no special knowledge of Japan, had become Secretary of State. He disagreed, fearing a voter backlash in the United States, and, thanks to his influence, no discussions of the Emperor's future took place.

V—THE MAKERS

They were in a hurry
to drop the bomb.

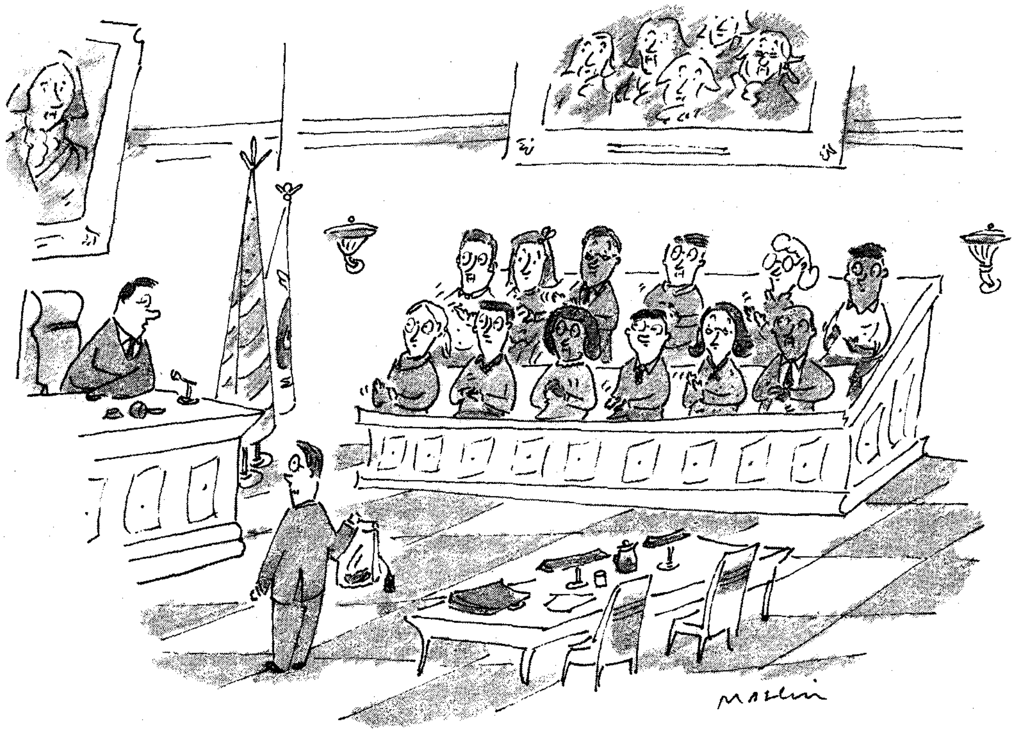
MEANWHILE, the Manhattan Project managers were lobbying hard in the opposite direction. Their thinking converged on the idea of administering a "profound psychological shock" either to "the Japanese" in general or to "the Emperor and his military advisers." In nuclear disguise, this was simply the nightmarish interwar theory of the knockout blow all over again. The search for psychological shock narrowed the choice of target to a small, flat, previously undamaged city; the aiming point was changed from a "vital war plant . . . closely surrounded by workers' houses," as had been proposed by Dr. James Conant, the president of Harvard, to a city center. The effect of both changes was to maximize civilian casualties. J. Robert Oppenheimer, the scientific director of Los Alamos, estimated that twenty thousand might die. (He did not reckon on the firestorm lit by the bomb, which quadrupled the deaths—an early, unintended case of overkill.) As Secretary of State-designate, James Byrnes sat in on these meetings. Byrnes later told President Truman that a "military source" (probably General Leslie Groves, the head of the Manhattan Project, who gave Truman the same figure) estimated that the invasion of Japan might result in a million American casualties—a figure in the realm of fantasy, since the Japanese would have had to hold off the invading Americans for six months, until both Kyushu and the main island of Honshu had been invaded, and almost all the invaders then wiped out. By the time the last wartime summit convened, at Potsdam, on July 16, 1945, and, that same day, the successful test of the first atomic bomb was secretly reported to Truman—some historians have argued that Truman delayed the conference until the bomb was tested—its use was already a foregone conclusion. So was the first target city, Hiroshima.



Six days after the news of the successful explosion of a plutonium-type bomb at Alamogordo, New Mexico, reached Truman in Potsdam, he received a detailed report from Groves. On July 24th, Truman signed an order, previously drafted by Groves, authorizing the atomic-bombing of Japan. We now know that Truman had been misinformed about what he was agreeing to. The next day, he wrote in his diary, "This weapon is to be used against Japan between now and August 10. I have told the Sec of War, Mr. Stimson, to use it so that military objectives and soldiers and sailors are to be the target and not women and children. . . . The target will be a purely military one and we will issue a warning statement asking the Japs to surrender and save lives. I'm sure they will not do that, but we will have given them a chance."

On July 26th, the last day of the Potsdam conference, Truman's "warning statement" was issued jointly by the United States, Britain, and China. Revised by Secretary of State Byrnes, the Potsdam Declaration called for the "unconditional surrender of the Japanese armed forces," adding, "The alternative for Japan is prompt and utter destruction"—an alternative that the Japanese could, and did, take to mean continued firebombing. Neither of the new threats facing Japan—the atomic bomb and Soviet intervention, then just two weeks away—was mentioned. Stimson made a last try to persuade Truman to leave open the possibility that the Japanese dynasty might continue, if the people wanted it, but he failed, because, as he said later, "too many people [in America] were likely to cry shame." On July 28th, Prime Minister Suzuki told a press conference in Tokyo that his government had found nothing new in the declaration and would "Kill it with silence"—that is, ignore it. Some historians have seen in this rebuff the first stage of a typical Japanese negotiation, blank refusal; others have suggested that the atomic bombs were America's response to it. But the bombing had already been ordered.

HOW accurate, we may well wonder, was the knowledge on which the use of the bomb was based? Three information loops, kept rigidly separate by wartime secrecy, had influenced the Americans who contributed to the bombing decision. The first loop, those who knew the secret of the bomb itself, numbered perhaps a hundred people. Congress and the media, the normal shapers of public opinion, were rigorously excluded. So were the opinions of many of the scientists working on the Manhattan Project. The Magic intercepts showing that peace moves of some sort were under way in Tokyo were even more closely held by the second loop—understandably, to protect their source. Only a handful of Truman's closest advisers saw them. The third loop, those who knew something about Japan and the role of its Emperor, and suspected—correctly, as it turned out—that he might have a constructive part to play, then and in the future, numbered not



"I'm going to ask the jury to hold its applause until all the evidence has been introduced."

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more than half a dozen in all, and were far from the scene: Truman took no Japan experts with him to Potsdam. The key point is that no one fully belonged to all three loops: no decision-maker had all the facts; only by understanding the little that the decision-makers knew, or thought they knew, can one make sense of their decisions.

General Groves's motivation is transparent. By the summer of 1945, he headed what was in effect a new branch of the American armed services—a nuclear-strike command, with fifteen aircraft and, after July 24th, two atomic bombs. Having made the bombs, Groves saw it as his duty to have them used, so that, among other things, their future effectiveness as weapons could be judged. He hoped to make Japan's ancient capital, Kyoto, the first target. He said later, "It was large enough in area for us to gain complete knowledge of the effects of the bomb. Hiroshima was not nearly so satisfactory in this respect." Groves was told that Kyoto had a million people, and reasoned that "any city of that size in Japan must be involved in a tremendous amount of war work, even if there were but a few large factories." The fact is that there were none in the center of Kyoto, the intended aiming point, which is a collection of wooden shrines and temples; but there were none of any size in central Hiroshima, either.

Fearing that a premature end to the war would prevent a practical test of the bomb, Groves speeded up his preparations after Germany surrendered. When Oppenheimer, worried about the weather, asked for a postponement in the Alamogordo test, Groves allowed him only a risky hour and a half. Groves's intent, he later explained, was to hasten the Potsdam proceedings: "I knew the effect a successful test would have on the issuance and wording of the Potsdam ultimatum. . . . A delay in issuing the Potsdam ultimatum could result in a delay in the Japanese reaction, with a further delay in the atomic attack on Japan." But he was out of the Magic loop, and knew nothing of Japan's ambiguous peace moves, and not much about Japan.

Byrnes, who had been Secretary of State for two weeks, saw Magic at Potsdam, and read it with a plain man's misunderstanding. "So long as the enemy demands unconditional surrender, we will fight as one man against the enemy," he said years later, quoting from an intercepted message (before it was declassified) that had been sent by Foreign Minister Togo to Ambassador Sato in Moscow on July 21, 1945. Byrnes garbled the text, but the gist is correct, as far as it goes: Byrnes denied that the Emperor's fate was the only sticking point, and didn't mention that well before the bombs were dropped Togo had gone on to inform his ambassador that Japan had "no objection to a peace based on the Atlantic Charter." Stimson, the only adviser close to Truman who was even partly included in all three information loops—he saw Magic, knew about the bomb, and had at least visited Japan—had also hoped that an early surrender would deny the Soviets a zone of occupation. "If the Russians seek joint occupation after a creditable participation in the conquest of Japan, I do not see how we could refuse them at least a token occupation," he advised Truman. But even Stimson never once suggested that the bomb not be used at all.

VI—THE DECISION

There seemed to be no downside to the bomb.

No one ever made a positive decision to drop the bomb on Hiroshima, only a negative one: not to interfere with a process that had begun years before, in very different circumstances. Truman later described it as "not any decision that you had to worry about," but a decision implies a choice, and Truman never contemplated, or even heard suggested, any delay, or any alternative to the bomb's use on a Japanese city.

Some scholars—especially those not of the wartime generation—have found it hard to believe that the act that launched the world into nuclear war could have come about so thoughtlessly, by default. Equally, many have found it incredible that the Potsdam talks were almost exclusively taken up with conflicts over Germany and Poland, and that the still ongoing war against Japan was not mentioned in any of the main sessions but merely tacked on as an afterthought. Understandably, a hidden link has been suspected: that Hiroshima was in some sense intended as the opening blast of the Cold War. In 1948, the British Nobel physicist Patrick Blackett argued that the bomb was used in order to force Japan's surrender before the Soviets could intervene; a later version, offered in 1965 by Professor Gar Alperovitz, of the University of Maryland, was that the *primary* motive was not to end the war but to intimidate the Soviets. In his forthcoming book, "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," he further develops his theme. The American-Soviet alliance was certainly cooling fast by the time of Potsdam, and few of the Americans at the conference still wanted Soviet help in the Far East. But to argue that the bomb was used in order to forestall Soviet intervention against Japan and the inevitable demand for a share in its occupation implies that *not* using it as soon as it was ready was ever considered; it was not.

Many threads, originally unconnected, met on that clear morning over Hiroshima. Hitler, by his persecutions, touched off a moral chain reaction that brought many brilliant minds to America, where they worked on the bomb. Originally intended to deter the Nazis, the bomb became at some point a bomb to be used—against Japan. Only thirty years separated the death of young Elsie Leggatt in London from the mass slaughter of the Second World War fire raids—three decades of scientific discovery so dizzying that the laws of war, painfully worked out over centuries, could only limp along behind, lost in a fog of half truths and official euphemisms about "dehousing the industrial workers," which involved killing them; "self-energized dislocation," or setting firestorms; "the technical suitability of target systems," meaning houses made of wood and straw. Then, in a flash, the veil was ripped away, the real idea behind strategic bombing made as brutally simple as the scientists' equation $E=mc^2$ (and, indeed, its very first practical application): one plane + one bomb = minus one Japanese city.

MONDAY, August 6, 1945, began like any other wartime day in Japan. By 8 A.M. most Hiroshima office workers were at their desks, children were at school, soldiers were doing physical exercises, high-school students and civilian work gangs were busy pulling down wooden houses to clear more firebreaks. During the night, there had been two air-raid alerts—and then all-clears. At 7:09 A.M., there was another alert, as a B-29 on a last weather check approached the city, and, at 7:31 A.M., another all-clear as it turned away. Minutes after eight, watchers in the city saw two B-29s approaching from the northeast: these were an observation plane and the Enola Gay. (Colonel Paul Tibbets, the pilot, had only the day before named the bomber after his mother.) The Enola Gay, in the lead, held its course straight and level for ten miles; at eight-fifteen, it let fall its single bomb. Immediately, the other B-29 banked hard to the left, the Enola Gay to the right; both quit the scene. Released at thirty-one thousand six hundred feet, or nearly six miles, the bomb fell for forty-three seconds and was triggered (by a barometric switch) by heavily symbolic chance nineteen hundred feet directly above a small hospital that was two hundred and sixty yards from the aiming point, the T-shaped Aioi Bridge.

Atomic bombs achieve their effects by means different from those of conventional high explosives. The Hiroshima bomb's stated equivalent of eleven thousand five hundred to thirteen thousand five hundred tons of TNT is thus somewhat misleading. When the man-made nuclear chain reaction took place over Hiroshima, the bomb itself was instantly vaporized, at a temperature of several million degrees centigrade, creating a fireball and radiating immense amounts of heat. Heated air then expanded in a shock wave. The blast effect is rapidly attenuated by distance, however, so that in Hiroshima the overpressure at ground level was less than that of a near miss by a conventional one-ton bomb. This explains why the A-Bomb Dome, almost directly under the point of detonation, still stands, and why most of the reinforced-concrete buildings near the hypocenter, having been designed to resist earthquakes, survived the bombing, only to be gutted by the subsequent fire.

Human beings and their houses fared differently. Heat radiated by the bomb burned exposed skin more than two miles from the hypocenter; wood and straw roofs were charred at almost the same distance and started fires in the wreckage of wooden houses, most of which collapsed inside a radius of a mile and a half. Instantaneous fires lit over a wide area are the recipe for a firestorm; one developed within half an hour of the bomb's exploding, and by 5 P.M., when it began to die down, nearly five square miles of central Hiroshima had been burned out. About three per cent of the bomb's energy was released as neutrons and gamma rays. These directly affected people who were exposed to them, set

"What I'd like to know, gentlemen, is how the hell we missed the boat on gangsta rap."

up residual radioactivity—which contaminated man-made materials, ground, and water—and caused fallout in a soot-stained "black rain" precipitated by the fires. From all these causes, between seventy thousand and eighty thousand people are estimated to have died on August 6th, with more deaths from radiation sickness spread over the ensuing days, months, and years.

Strictly military damage was insignificant. The headquarters of the Second General Army, responsible for the defense of Japan as far south as Kyushu, were in Hiroshima, but its commander, Field Marshal Shunroku Hata, had prudently established his personal command post on a mountainside a mile and a half away, where he survived, unhurt, to declare limited martial law in the city. His operations section, a mile from the hypocenter, was damaged but reparable. Some three thousand officers and men of the Hiroshima garrison, whose barracks were in the medieval Hiroshima Castle, were killed, along with (according to persistent reports) a small number of American prisoners of war. Altogether, around twenty thousand soldiers, in the city for one reason or another, may have died. But the city's rail service started up twenty-four hours later; the docks and the dock yards, protected by a low hill, were mostly undamaged; no significant war production was lost. The only effect that Hiroshima could possibly have had on the war was the psychological shock on the leaders in Tokyo, some four hundred miles away. They had to hear about it first.

The first specific news of what had happened reached Tokyo, ironically, from Washington. On the day of the bombing, the White House released a statement, drafted by Groves's office, that broke the long-kept secret. Addressing Americans, the release opened on a vengeful note. "The Japanese began the war from the air at Pearl Harbor. They have been repaid manyfold. And the end is not yet." The bomb was atomic, the statement revealed, and even more powerful ones were being developed. Taxpayers' money had not been wasted: "We have spent two billion dollars on the greatest scientific gamble in history—we won." Thanks, the release added, to the United States Army, "which achieved a unique success in managing so diverse a problem in the advancement of knowledge in an amazingly short time." It ended with a threat: "We are now prepared to obliterate more rapidly and completely every productive enterprise the Japanese have above ground in any city. We shall destroy their docks, their factories, their communications. . . . If they do not now accept our terms, they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth." This was bluff. America had only one more bomb immediately available, and Japan had few functioning productive enterprises left.

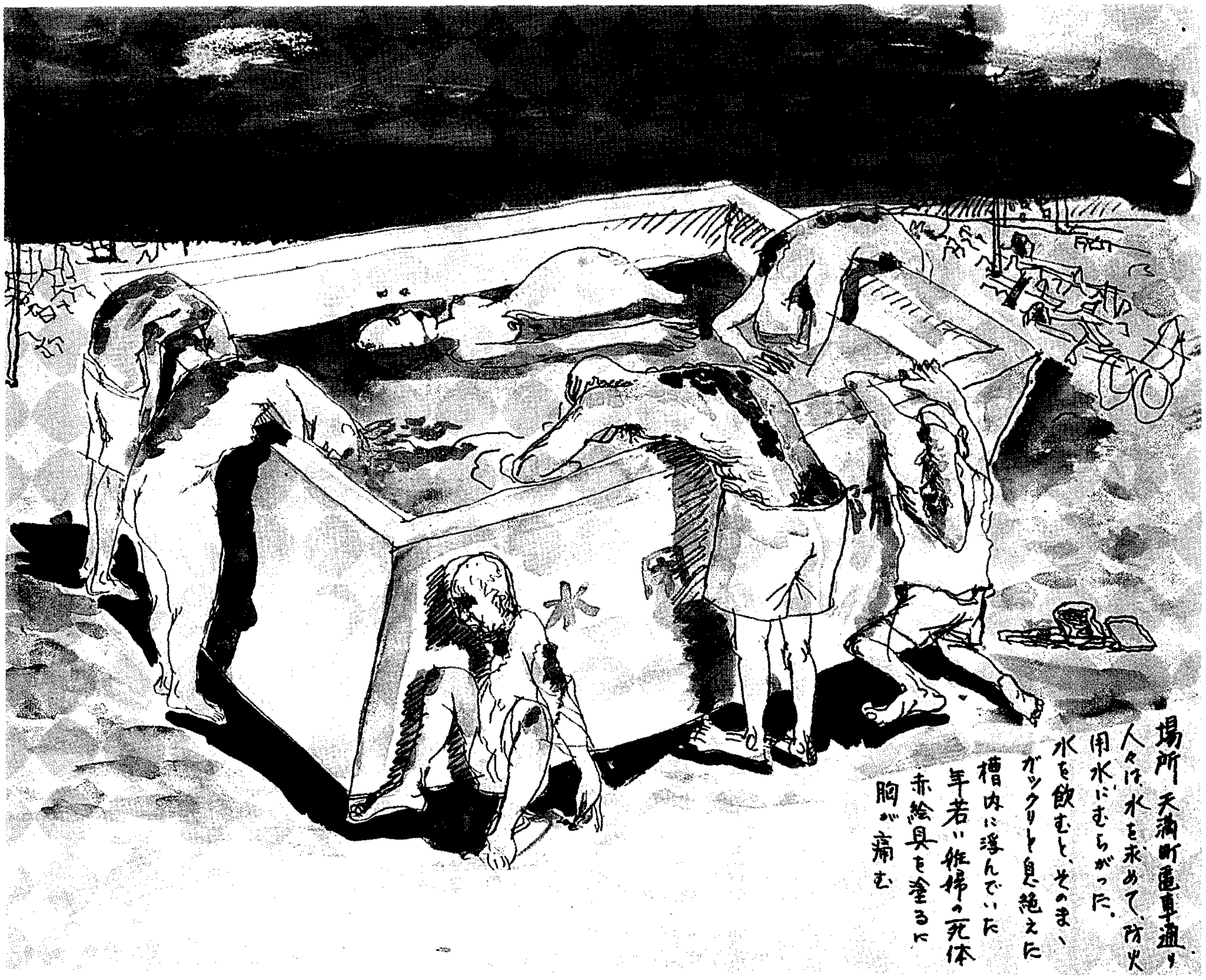
THE next day, the Japanese Cabinet set up an Atomic Bomb Countermeasure Committee. It met, inconclusively, in an atmosphere of rumor and contradictory reports. The Foreign Ministry sent a protest to Washington, via Switzerland, against the use of "an inhuman weapon." On August 8th, Foreign Affairs Minister Togo met with the Emperor and showed him preliminary reports on the bombing. Hirohito asked him to renew to Prime Minister Suzuki the imperial wish for a quick end to the war. Late on the same day, in Moscow, Ambassador Sato was at last granted his long-sought meeting with Foreign Affairs Commissar Molotov. Before Sato could ask for Soviet mediation, Molotov curtly told him to be seated and read out the Soviet declaration of war on Japan. Within a few hours, Soviet tanks and troops had crossed the Manchurian border in force.

The next morning, August 9th, Hirohito told his tireless legman, Lord Privy Seal Kido, that "now that the Soviets have entered the war with Japan, there is urgent need to resolve the problem of a ceasefire," and asked Kido to convey this message to Prime Minister Suzuki. Suzuki asked a military adviser about the state of the Manchurian defenses; on hearing that they were hopelessly inadequate to stop the Soviet invaders, he sighed and said, "Then the game is up." At 10:30 A.M., the Supreme Council for the Direction of the War, the Big Six, met in a bunker under the gutted Imperial Palace in Tokyo. But in the meeting that followed, the deadlock in the leadership continued. Prime Minister Suzuki proposed that Japan accept the Potsdam Declaration. Foreign Minister Togo suggested that only one condition be attached: a guarantee of the welfare of the imperial family. Minister of War Anami and the two service chiefs of staff wanted three more conditions: limitation of the area to be occupied, war criminals to be tried by Japan, and Japanese forces to disarm themselves. Togo responded that there was a better chance of getting the guarantee involving the Emperor accepted if it was the only condition proposed.

While the meeting was in progress, the B-29 Bock's Car dropped the second, plutonium-type bomb, on Nagasaki, at 11:02 A.M. A full air-raid warning was sounded before the bombing, but then scaled down to an alert, and only about four hundred people had remained in shelters. But, unlike the textbook perfection of Hiroshima, Nagasaki suffered the mishaps that mar most military operations: fuel was running low, the target was cloud-covered, and the bomb fell a mile and a half from the city center, destroying an outlying suburb, Urakami, which had the heaviest concentration of Christians and the biggest Catholic church in all Japan. No true firestorm broke out, but two arguably legitimate military targets, a foundry and a rolling mill, were wrecked. Between twenty thousand and thirty thousand people lost their lives that day.

Unable to agree (and with only confused, sketchy reports from Nagasaki), the Big Six adjourned at one o'clock, and the full Japanese Cabinet met between 3:30 P.M. and 10 P.M., with an hour out for dinner. Still there was no consensus: the civilians, with a couple of exceptions, were for accepting Potsdam, with a guarantee for the Emperor; most of the military leaders still wanted all four conditions attached. Suzuki and Togo, favoring a single-condition surrender, found a novel way out. For the first time in Japanese history, they asked for a conference with the Emperor in order to report not a unanimous decision but an unbreakable disagreement among the leadership. Hirohito agreed to receive the military chiefs and members of the Cabinet at midnight, in his air-raid shelter. There, for two hours, they reviewed the arguments of the afternoon. At 2 A.M., Suzuki approached the throne (Hirohito was actually sitting on a hard wooden chair behind a desk) and, apologizing for their failure to reach a new consensus, asked Hirohito for *his* opinion. "I agree with the proposal of the Foreign Minister," the Emperor said. "Now is the time to bear the unbearable." At 3 A.M., the Cabinet members reconvened: they agreed unanimously to attach only one condition. Togo hurried bleary-eyed to the Foreign Ministry to draft telegrams to the Allies accepting the Potsdam terms "with the understanding that the terms enumerated in the said Declaration do not include any demand for modification of the prerogatives of His Majesty as a sovereign ruler."

The war was not over yet—this was not unconditional surrender—but the events of August 9, 1945, were undoubtedly the crucial step in the peace process. The role the atomic bombs played in ending the war therefore rests on exactly what happened in Tokyo on that day. The part attributable to the Soviets' treachery (from the Japanese viewpoint: the Soviet-Japanese neutrality pact still had more than eight months to run) is clear; it forced the leadership to find a new peace policy. It is harder to say exactly what the atomic bombs contributed. Outside Japan, few knew of the approaches to Moscow, or of the political maneuverings and the desperate situation inside Japan, and therefore the sequence of events seemed clear: the second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, and early the next day the Japanese were publicly suing for peace. In the day's news, the Soviet intervention was barely mentioned, overshadowed by the bomb, and its implications were not discussed. To those who had read the menacing White House statement released three days earlier and now learned of Japan's acceptance of the Potsdam terms, it seemed obvious that "the Japanese" had at last been terrorized into surrender. Seemingly self-evident, this was only a guess. To tie it down as a historical fact, the mechanism by which fear was translated into decision needs to be laid bare. Who, exactly, was shocked into submission by the bombs? A study of the day's events among the Tokyo leadership, the only people who could sue for peace, uncovers a cause-and-effect sequence fully capable of forcing the decision, without the bombs.

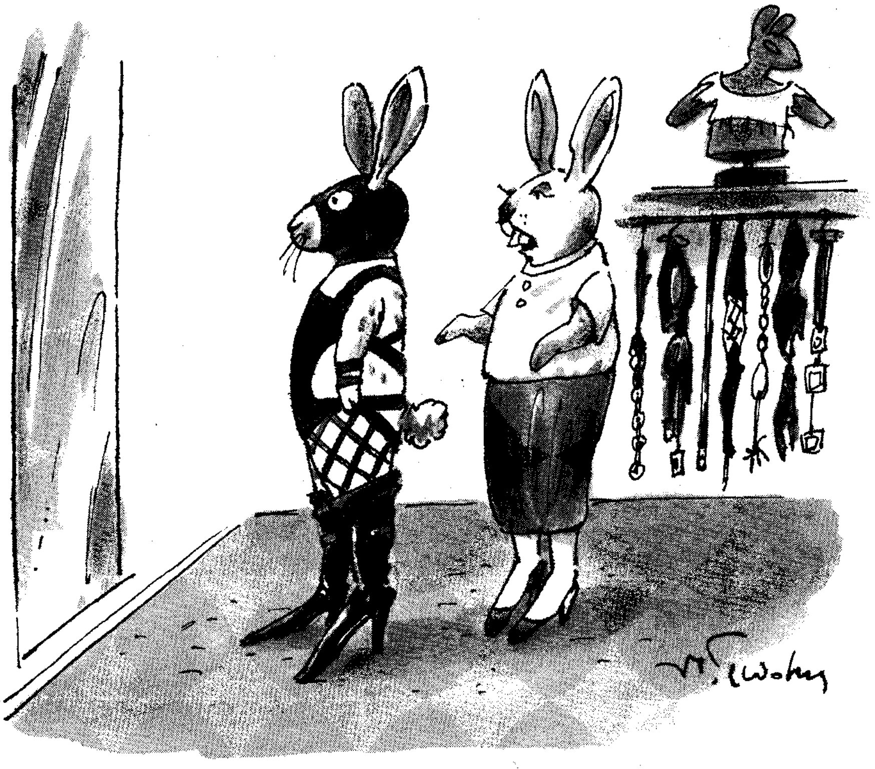

水
場所 天満町電車通り
人々は水を求めて防火
用水にむらがった。
水を飲むと、そのまま、
ガックリと息絶えた
槽内に浮んでいた
年若い妊婦の死体
赤絵具を塗るに
胸が痛む

Above: "People swarm to the water tanks and die even as they drink. The body of a young pregnant woman floats there."—Kiaki Ono.

As early as twelve weeks before Hiroshima, the Big Six had agreed to seek peace. The issue then dividing them—a huge difference, to be sure, for the prospective American invaders—was whether to do so after winning the "battle of the homeland" (but not the war itself, for that was plainly lost) or immediately, by negotiation, which was what Hirohito and his civilian ministers wanted. No one, however, was ready for unconditional surrender. The consensus-saving compromise had been to send Prince Konoe to Moscow, leaving up to him the terms he could negotiate—and promising more wrangling in Tokyo, on whether to accept them.

This scenario, never very realistic, grew less so every day the Soviets stalled. The Soviet declaration of war and the invasion of Manchuria finally exploded it, and the uneasy consensus in the Tokyo leadership disintegrated. Even if Americans were war-weary, as some Japanese hoped, the Soviets plainly were not. The Soviet moves meant that Japan now faced the world's best tank army, on open plains giving every advantage to the attacker; imminent defeat; invasion from a new direction; and (according to the precedent set in Germany) the partition and Communization of at least a part of the Japanese home islands. A new consensus had to be found, and quickly: with just about the entire world now in arms against Japan, a direct approach to the country's enemies became, overnight, the only way still open for continuing the peace overtures that in principle had already been agreed on by the Japanese leadership.

The meeting of the Big Six on August 9, 1945, was called, on an indirect suggestion that Hirohito had made the evening before, to discuss the reports of the Hiroshima bombing. It might have considered surrender, but we will never know. By the time the meeting took place, around 10:30 the next morning, the priority order of business had become how to respond to the Soviet entry into the war. Yet neither the bombs nor the Soviet intervention, we now know, actually broke the impasse; the Big Six were still divided, and, subsequently, so was the full Cabinet. Why did Suzuki and Togo decide to take a divided Cabinet to Hirohito? Because Kido told them that the Emperor desired some action. Why had Hirohito, if he favored peace, not taken this step earlier? Because the Cabinet *had* agreed on the ambivalent peace approach via Moscow, and that was a decision the Emperor could not unilaterally reverse, according to his reading of the Japanese constitution. Why did the Minister of War, General Anami, go along with Hirohito's wishes when the Emperor at last voiced them? Because Hirohito was his Commander-in-Chief. As long as Hirohito merely acquiesced in unanimous Big Six decisions, and the military controlled the Big Six, the armed forces were the real rulers of Japan, in the Emperor's name. But when the Emperor himself spoke directly to the Minister of War, who had once been his aide-de-camp, the fiction suddenly became reality: Anami had been given a direct order. Hirohito had followed the decision-making process set down in the constitution as long as it worked; only when it broke down, and a crisis demanded action, did he make his own wishes known—as he had done once before, when he personally ordered the suppression of a junior officers' coup on February 26, 1936, but only because he thought that the Prime Minister had been assassinated and there was no regular government.


"When I started here, it was all Beatrix Potter."

Which was the crisis that Hirohito and his divided Cabinet believed now made the Emperor's personal decision necessary—the atomic bombs, Soviet intervention, or the worsening situation as a whole? Certainly the new bombs added to Japan's woes—along with the ongoing sea blockade, "conventional" firebombing, burned-out cities, total enemy control of sea and air, the shelling of ports by battleships close inshore, mass hunger, and the promise of a meagre rice harvest. A small provincial city had been largely destroyed, by fire, and another partly destroyed. But then so had Japan's capital, Tokyo, and the B-29s, still eliminating such "productive enterprises" as Japan "had above ground," were doing so at least as effectively as atomic bombs could. The war had continued despite the fire raids; the new atomic weapon did not interfere with the Army chiefs' military plans, or change their indifference to civilian casualties. The Soviet intervention, however, demanded a new consensus, because it made the existing consensus inoperative. And—a point implicit in much of the leadership's discussion—the bombs promised only to kill more Japanese, whereas the Soviets, possibly allied with local Communists, threatened to destroy the monarchy, which almost all Japanese, and certainly those in the government, viewed as the soul of the nation. A surrender with some guarantee for the Emperor thus became the best of a gloomy range of options, and the quicker the better, because every day that passed meant more gains on the ground for the Soviets, and thus a likely bigger share of the inevitable occupation. Recognition that a surrender today will be more favorable than one tomorrow is the classic reason that wars end.

Togo's telegram meant that Japan's problem—the lack of consensus in To-

UKIYO-E

Puddles of *mirin* and soy
on our crusted plates,

daikon, *matsuba*,
a half-eaten muscle of eel,

and those plums in their bitter juice
at the rim of your bowl,

as if we had met in Kyoto
or ghostly Nagoya

and climbed here out of the snow
through a lake of bamboo.

The drum bridge at Kameido almost appears
when I open the curtains,

then drizzle, and London Road,
and the old

hospital, locked in its acre
of knotweed and pines:

those smudges of black on the leaves
like a printmaker's ink,

drying for two hundred years,
while we almost recover

the smoke of Minami,
the vinegar hidden in thaw.

—JOHN BURNSIDE

kyo for surrendering without some guarantee of the monarchy's continuation—had now become America's. The sudden surrender offer was unexpected; Secretary of War Stimson had already packed for his vacation. Two reasons for his surprise stand out. The first is that, despite Truman's claims for the new weapon, the atomic bombs had yet to acquire their reputation as instant war-winners; in fact, American plans called for many more to be used in the planned invasion. The second reason is that the Magic intercepts were in many ways misleading: the Japanese had been maneuvering for peace in Moscow, so no one in Washington expected that Soviet intervention would drive Japan's rulers into the arms not of Stalin but of Harry Truman.

Faced with the surrender offer, Secretary of War Stimson was again one of the first to press the advantages, for the United States, of keeping Hirohito on his throne—for the time being, anyway. America, he said, would have to leave the Emperor on his throne at least long enough for him to order the surrender of Japanese armies scattered throughout Asia and the Pacific, "to save us from a score of bloody Iwo Jimas and Okinawas," since Hirohito's name was the only authority the Japanese military would accept. Failure to guarantee his position might also prolong the war, to the Soviets' advantage. "I felt it was of great importance to get the homeland into our hands before the Russians could put in any substantial claim to occupy and help rule it," Stimson wrote in his diary. The obstacle was America's demands for unconditional surrender, originally made to avoid negotiating with Hitler, then transferred without much thought to Japan. "Now they come to plague us," Stimson noted ruefully. As for Byrnes, he still feared a backlash among American voters over retaining the Emperor. "Now that the United States has the bomb," he said, "I do not see why we should retreat from our demand for unconditional surrender. . . . If any conditions are to be accepted, I want the United States and not Japan to state the conditions."

VII—THE DEADLOCK

Hirohito acted twice to end the war.

On August 11th, the Allies' reply to Togo's telegram was broadcast in Tokyo, and the next day Tokyo learned that Soviet troops had entered Korea, which was then a Japanese colony. The conventional bombing of Japanese cities continued. So did the deadlock in Tokyo. The Allies' reply did not guarantee the Emperor's position as "sovereign ruler"—the condition that the military chiefs had demanded—but said only that the Japanese might someday choose their own form of government. They might, of course, choose a monarchy, and even Hirohito as monarch—as they subsequently did—but their doing so would make the Emperor, and thus the Army, subject to the will of the people, invalidating the official Japanese theory of Hirohito's right to rule by divine descent. On August 13th, the Big Six, and then the Cabinet, met again; and they found that they were still split.

Overnight, seven B-29s dropped five million leaflets on Tokyo and four other cities, giving the texts of the Japanese offer to surrender and the Allies' reply. Privy Seal Kido read one, and feared that it would touch off a spontaneous uprising by troops determined to continue the war. Hirohito agreed to call a full imperial conference of the Cabinet, plus the top military commanders—the first since the conference on December 1, 1941, which had decided on Pearl Harbor—for 11 A.M. in his air-raid shelter.

Suzuki opened the conference by reporting that both the Cabinet and the Supreme Council for the Direction of the War (that is, the Big Six) were still

"I have to go home now. My parents are having dinner guests and they want to showcase me at seven."

split, and calling on the holdouts to speak. Minister of War Anami, displaying (for a Japanese general) deep emotion, said, "It would be better to fight on. We could still achieve something. If not to win, at least to end the war on better terms than these." Suzuki said, "There are no other views to present." Hirohito rose and said, "My mind is unchanged. I believe it is impossible to continue the war any longer. . . . The [Allied] reply is acceptable. . . . If the people, the land, and the imperial family survive, however, we can yet hope to rebuild the nation." Hirohito brushed a white-gloved hand across his eyes and then left the room. The Cabinet reconvened to vote unanimously to accept the Potsdam Declaration and to draft a rescript for the Emperor to record, to be broadcast at noon the next day, August 15th.

The rescript is an evasive document, written for immediate effect. It says, "We have decided to effect a settlement of the present situation," and adds—at Anami's insistence, to spare the Army's feelings—that "the war situation has developed not necessarily to Japan's advantage, while the general trends of the world have all turned against her interest." The latter statement must refer to the Soviet intervention, the only recent change in "general trends." Hirohito's rescript goes on, "Moreover, the enemy has begun to employ a new and most cruel bomb, the power of which to do damage is indeed incalculable, taking the toll of many innocent lives." This reference to the atomic bomb, it has been argued, establishes that it did indeed bring about Japan's surrender. However, Hirohito's rescript was addressed not to historians but to his subjects, and particularly to civilians, who had been told almost nothing about Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Responsibility for Japan's plight was shifted away from the Army and onto America: a cruel weapon has been used to kill the innocent. Hirohito's personal ceasefire order to the Japanese forces, issued the next day, gives an explanation, stressing fear of Soviet Communism, not of atomic bombs:

> The Soviet Union has now entered the war, and in view of the state of affairs both here and abroad, We feel that the prolongation of the struggle will merely serve to further the evil and may eventually result in the loss of the very foundation on which our Empire exists. Therefore, in spite of the fact that the fighting spirit of the Imperial army and navy are still high, We hereupon intend to negotiate a peace . . . for the sake of maintaining our glorious national polity.

Both documents explain the surrender, but the second was aimed at those who most needed persuading—Japan's military.

General Anami, as a samurai, was not about to surrender. Having voted with the Cabinet for peace, as Hirohito had commanded him, and then helped draft the rescript, he had done his duty to his sovereign. While Hirohito was recording the surrender broadcast, and more than a thousand American bombers were staging the last, heaviest conventional raids of the war, Anami went home and took a bath. His fanatical brother-in-law, Lieutenant Colonel Masahiko Takeshita, stopped by shortly after midnight hoping to persuade him to continue the war. He found the general drinking sake and working on a poem. Just before dawn, Anami slashed his stomach with a sword, and Takeshita, at his request, helped him thrust a dagger into his throat. He died hours later. His poem reads cryptically:

> Having received great favors
> From His Majesty,
> When dying
> I have nothing to say.

At noon on August 15, 1945, Hirohito's recording was broadcast. Many

Japanese thought that he was exhorting them to fight on. Anami did not live to hear the Emperor read the words he had helped draft, or to suffer the disgrace of surrender. Torn between two inescapable loyalties—to his sovereign, who wanted peace, and to his closest subordinates, who wanted to continue the fight—the general had taken the samurai's way out, dying slowly, in agony, to show that he had chosen death not out of fear but to serve his master in a different way, as his poem indicates. Perhaps as many as two thousand officers and civilians killed themselves over the next few days—an indication of how comparatively thin the layer of last-ditch ultranationalism was when the day of reckoning arrived. With them died the ideology, and the political power, of the old Japanese Army; the present Japanese self-defense forces do not teach the samurai code and have little influence on Japanese politics.

VIII—ORPHAN CITY

Hiroshima disappeared from public gaze.

OVER ruined Hiroshima, a great silence descended. During the eighteen days of chaos between the peace announcement, on August 15th, and the formal surrender ceremony, on September 2nd, local Japanese Army commands distributed the remaining military stocks of rice and other materials, fearing that the occupiers would seize them. In Hiroshima, however, there were no more supplies to distribute. A Japanese hospital ship had been promised days after the bombing, but it never docked. Japanese soldiers and sailors from undamaged military facilities nearby arrived to burn or bury bodies in mass graves. Medical volunteers from neighboring cities, hampered by lack of supplies, gave whatever help they could; radiation burns, for instance, were treated with cooking or lubricating oil. For at least a week, the people of Hiroshima had no idea what had happened to them, and during that time a hundred and fifty thousand fled the ruins. Weeks later, modern medicines started to arrive: first from the International Red Cross, via the Swiss; then from the American Red Cross; and, finally, from the United States Army. The troops sent by General MacArthur to occupy the Hiroshima region were almost all Australians.

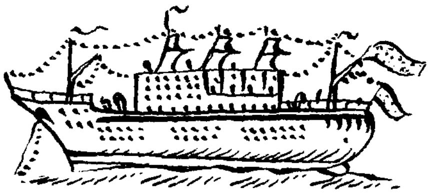
On August 20, 1945, *Life* published full-page aerial photographs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; Americans saw for the first time the now familiar image of the mushroom cloud—the atomic bomb seen from the air. (The ground view is better known in Japan.) "We have sowed the whirlwind," Hanson Baldwin, the military commentator of the *Times*, wrote the day after Hiroshima. Other quiet voices began to question the wisdom of the bomb, but what had actually happened on the ground remained an official secret for more than a year, with only one important leak.

On September 3, 1945, an enterprising Australian newsman, Wilfred Burchett, reporting for the London *Daily Express*, arrived in Hiroshima by train from Tokyo, alone and unescorted. Filed by Morse code from the Hiroshima office of the Japanese news agency Domei, his piece began:

> In Hiroshima, thirty days after the first atomic bomb destroyed the city and shook the world, people are still dying, mysteriously and horribly—people who were uninjured in the cataclysm from an unknown something which I can only describe as the atomic plague.

Burchett's piece ran in his paper two days later, and was picked up worldwide. He had stumbled on the ugliest secret of the atomic bomb—radiation sickness—which had been downplayed by its inventors, and not previously mentioned in either Japan or America. The atomic scientists, it emerged, had discovered not only the ideal weapon for achieving tactical surprise and fire-raiding in crowded wooden cities but also a new and still dimly understood way of dying—another terror for those threatened by war.

On September 10th, in Tokyo, General Douglas MacArthur had issued a Freedom of Speech and Press Directive: "The Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers has decreed that there shall be an absolute minimum of restrictions upon freedom of speech." On September 18th, he reimposed censorship on the Japanese press (which during the war years had, of course, been strictly controlled by the military regime) with a press code banning, among other things, anything that "might, directly or by inference, disturb public tranquillity," or convey "false or destructive criticism of the Allied Powers" or "destructive criticism of the Allied forces of Occupation . . . which might invite mistrust or resentment of those troops."



Hiroshima and Nagasaki soon vanished from the news in Japan, the United States, and the world. Japanese crews that photographed the ruined cities had their film confiscated. On the day the press code was issued, publication of the newspaper *Asahi* was suspended because it contained an article describing the atomic bomb as "a violation of international law and a war crime worse than an attack on a hospital ship or the use of poison gas." Japanese doctors were discouraged from studying the survivors in the two cities, and the scientific papers of any who did were suppressed. So were novels, and even poems, about the atomic bombs, on the ground that they would disturb public tranquillity and create ill will toward the United States.

One research group was beyond the reach of the Tokyo censors. On the day of Japan's surrender, Truman ordered the United States Strategic Bombing Survey—a unit that had been established in 1944 by Roosevelt to investigate the results of bombing in Germany—to study the effects of conventional and atomic bombing in Japan. The Bombing Survey (commonly called Uss-busters), with more than a thousand researchers, economists, and interpreters, and with the President's backing, arrived a month after the surrender, toured the devastated islands, and interviewed members of the Japanese wartime government. From their report, released in Washington in June of 1946, this paragraph stands out:

> Certainly prior to December 31, 1945, and in all probability prior to November 1, 1945 [the planned date of the Kyushu invasion], Japan would have surrendered even if

the atomic bombs had not been dropped, even if Russia had not entered the war, and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated.

The Uss-busters' report was long, technical, and mainly concerned with Japan's desperate economic plight, and it made no moral judgment on the atomic bombs; the officially sponsored version that they had terrified a fanatical military regime into surrendering was by then beyond challenge.

On August 31, 1946, the novelist and war correspondent John Hersey broke more than a year's silence on Hiroshima with a long article in *The New Yorker*. An account of six Hiroshima survivors, Hersey's article restored names and addresses to what had been mounds of anonymous dead in the news reports. The people of Hiroshima turned out, in his account, to be not unlike Americans. In many respects, Hersey could have been writing about Tokyo or Dresden—except that he described the appalling results of radiation, first mentioned briefly by Burchett, with a realism all the more heartrending for being quietly understated. Hersey's piece brought a quick rejoinder from the makers of the bomb.

One of the more sophisticated voices joining the debate was that of Dr. James B. Conant, the president of Harvard, who was himself a chemist. Conant was one of the important developers of poison gas in the First World War and of napalm and the atomic bomb in the Second. Writing late in 1946 to an old friend, the Boston lawyer Harvey H. Bundy (who had also worked on the bomb), Conant explained that he remained "quite unrepentant" about its use. Expressions like "the crime of Hiroshima and Nagasaki," Conant believed, were forms of "sentimentalism" that might "result in a distortion of history." To Bundy he complained of a widespread impression that the scientists who built the bomb had not been consulted about its use, though some of them had even participated in target selection: "I think it unfair for the scientists to try and dodge the responsibility for this decision, although of course they were not in a position to influence greatly whatever was done at Potsdam." Conant urged that "someone who can speak with authority" should make a clear-cut statement about the circumstances behind the decision to drop the bomb. The ideal authority, he felt, was the widely respected—and by then retired—Secretary of War Henry Stimson, who happened at that time to be working on his memoirs with the assistance of Harvey Bundy's lawyer son, McGeorge. The choice of Stimson was ironic; of all those closely connected with the bomb, he had agonized most over where its use might lead.

Pressured by Conant, Stimson reluctantly agreed to write an article along the lines suggested. "The history of it is that Jim Conant felt very much worried over the spreading accusation that it was entirely unnecessary to use the atomic bomb," he later explained to Justice Felix Frankfurter. "I have rarely been connected with a paper about which I have [had] so much doubt at the last moment. . . . I think the full enumeration of the steps in the tragedy will excite horror among friends who heretofore thought me a kindly-minded Christian gentleman but who will, after reading this, feel that I am cold-blooded and cruel." The article, largely drafted by McGeorge Bundy, was heavily rewritten by Conant. "The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb," by Henry L. Stimson (the only author credited), was the cover story of *Harper's* for the issue of February, 1947. Though McGeorge Bundy later conceded that it was "not a piece of history," it was as reliable history that it was presented and, as such, was widely praised and lastingly influential.

Read in the light of what we know now, Stimson's article is filled with evasions and half-truths. The military use of the bomb, he wrote, was agreed on from the beginning: "If we should be the first to develop the weapon, we should have a great new instrument for shortening the war and minimizing destruction." But, during the war, Stimson had been a forceful opponent of saturation bombing. In 1945 he told Truman that he was trying to hold the Air Forces to the precision bombing of Japanese military targets, because he "did not want to have the United States get the reputation of outdoing Hitler in atrocities"—and precision bombing was, of course, impossible with the atomic bomb. In his private diary, which became available two decades later, Stimson deplored the firebombing of Dresden as "on its face terrible and probably unnecessary." Stimson's *Harper's* article noted that "the possible atomic weapon was considered to be a new and tremendously powerful explosive, as legitimate as any other of the deadly explosive weapons of modern war"—but he did not mention radiation sickness, which by 1947 had already cast much doubt on its legitimacy.

Stimson's article reported that Japan had made "tentative proposals to the Soviet government," and that "there was as yet no weakening in the Japanese determination to fight rather than to accept unconditional surrender"—but he did not say that the position of the Emperor, eventually conceded, was the only sticking point, as the Magic intercepts (still a closely held secret in 1947) must have made clear to those who saw them. He rightly claimed credit for keeping Kyoto off the target list, but called it "a target of considerable military importance," which by 1947 was known to be untrue. He cited an estimate of a million American lives saved by the bombs, but did not discuss the Strategic Bombing Survey's opinion, already published by then, that Japan would have surrendered before the Kyushu invasion.

Stimson's defense of the atomic bombs comes down to a familiar pair of propositions: (1) the atomic bombs caused the Japanese surrender, and (2) the surrender saved a large number of American lives.

His version of what happened to end the war has long since hardened into dogma: "We believed that our [nuclear] attacks had struck cities which must certainly be important to the Japanese military leaders, both Army and Navy, and we waited for a result. We waited one day." Aside from his implications that the Japanese Army and Navy had somehow been intimidated by attacks on minor installations, his argument rests on the fallacy post hoc, ergo propter hoc—after, therefore because. But at the time Stimson wrote it was already known that the atomic bombs, in fact, had little

Opposite: "A man who died apparently on the spot lies there with one hand pointing to the sky. Blue flames rise from his fingers, and liquid the color of Indian ink drips down."—Nobuko Takakura.

effect on Japan's physical ability to continue the war. The target committee, in drawing up its list, did not consider the military importance of any of them. Above all, Stimson's article pretended that the issue of whether to drop the bomb was seriously studied; we know that it was not.

However, the sequence of events—Hiroshima, Nagasaki, surrender offer—is striking. Could it be that pure coincidence has clouded our understanding of the surrender for half a century? Indeed it could. By themselves, the dates prove nothing. In his article Stimson went further, not simply saying that the atomic bombs were intended to shorten the war, and thus save lives, which was no doubt true (and could be said of any action in any war), but arguing that they actually *did* end the war. This is the only defense he offers for their use—and the only defense seriously put forward by anyone since. This argument needs at least some supporting evidence; there is none.

IX—THE RECKONING

Who has paid the heavier price?

ONE approach to the morality of the atomic bombs is to consider the consequences. In Japan (apart from those who lost their lives, families, and friends at the time), they have been contradictory. Japan has developed no nuclear weapons, and has shown a strong disinclination to participate in any new wars—Japan did not, for instance, send soldiers to Korea, Vietnam, or the Persian Gulf. On the other hand, meaningful examination by the Japanese of their own aggressive past tends to stop short when Hiroshima or Nagasaki is brought into the discussion; I have yet to find any Japanese who will agree that the bombs saved any Japanese lives, or American lives, either—although Americans visiting the bombed cities report sensing no hostility. Although radiation is known to induce mutations in all species exposed to it, the most recent studies of the children of atomic-bomb survivors have found no clear increase in stillbirths, deformities, or shortened life expectancy; the Japanese government has stopped adding them to the list of those needing special medical help. Physically, at least, the two cities have put the bombs behind them.

For Americans, the consequences of the atomic bomb have been more lastingly—if less obviously—traumatic. With peace proclaimed only days after the bombs were dropped, the Soviet intervention against Japan scarcely reported, and the complicated maneuverings in Tokyo concealed for years, it was assumed (except in Japan) that the bombs had subdued an enemy still full of fight, clearly achieving the victory for the knockout blow, as the air-power prophets had predicted. If there is such a process as military leaders being cowed into submission by air attacks, nuclear or otherwise, history has no clear example of it. Nevertheless, the United States' own defense and that of her allies, including, by proxy, Japan's, was based for many years on this unverified theory: immense resources have gone into nuclear weapons, for no benefit beyond self-perpetuating deterrence.

Unfortunately for Americans, the bomb also appeared, in 1945, to be the providential answer to an old problem, shared by all democracies. When peace broke out, millions of men and women in uniform suddenly wanted to go home, all at once. But the United States, as the world's strongest industrial power, undamaged by war, now had global responsibilities that might call for military action anywhere on the planet. The armed forces shrank to one and a half million; garrisons in what were judged to be far-off, unimportant places, like Korea, were withdrawn, leaving only handfuls of advisers. In 1947, the United States Air Force, now the glamour service, the presumed winner of the war, finally became independent, free to shape its own "air-atomic" strategy. When Stalin tested American resolve by cutting ground access to Berlin in 1948, Truman responded by sending B-29s to the same bases in England from which Germany had been bombed. The new Strategic Air Command, the successor of Groves's pioneer nuclear force, made plans to drop two atomic bombs on each of seventy Soviet cities. Diplomacy, and even strategy, had temporarily become superfluous, superseded by confidence in the miraculous, mindless knockout blow.

In September of 1949, the dream turned to nightmare when the Soviets tested their own nuclear weapon. "Keep your shirt on," Oppenheimer advised his colleague Edward Teller, the "father" of the hydrogen bomb. Many Americans did not; any city in this country could now, at least in imagination, be another Hiroshima. The United States began a hunt for spies and traitors; atomic scientists began denouncing one another; Oppenheimer himself was subject to a political show trial, disguised as a public hearing over his security clearance, which was denied. These are totalitarian attitudes, imposed by the nature of the atomic bomb itself, and they surfaced most dramatically in the shameful McCarthy era.

Like the firebombings that cleared the moral path for them, nuclear weapons accept, without reflection, the doctrine that the nation is a kind of living organism, open to attack anyhow and anywhere, as opposed to the democratic principle that people are individually responsible for their actions. The use, or threat, of nuclear weapons presupposes omniscient supermen who can never make a mistake. Democracy accepts that our leaders are fallible human beings, like the people who elected them, who all too often, in the Biblical phrase, know not what they do—but who can be held to account, can have second thoughts, can put mistakes right. No one can put mass death right.

We ask Hiroshima to carry too many burdens. In August of 1945, the city suffered for Pearl Harbor, for Japan's fruitless alliance with Nazi Germany (the death camps, then newly opened, were all too well known), for the anti-rational, death-obsessed ideology of the Japanese officer corps, for the labyrinthine Japanese decision-avoiding process, for the ill-thought-out Allied demand for unconditional surrender, for the atrocities committed by Japanese soldiers against civilians and prisoners of war, for the presumed misdeeds of some (but not all) of the people actually in the city, for the monstrous, random cruelty of war itself. In the decades since, Hiroshima has had to carry the metaphorical weight of the Cold War, the morally arid balance of terror, and the sometimes frightening, sometimes perversely stabilizing nuclear standoff. Now these problems, never themselves solved, have transmuted into dangers more diffuse but not much less menacing. It is a heavy load for one unfortunate Japanese seaport to bear. ♦

FROM THE ARCHIVES

THE DAY THE BOMB FELL

An excerpt from the author's 1946 article "Hiroshima."

BY JOHN HERSEY

John Hersey, photographed by Irving Penn, in 1948.

All day, people poured into Asano Park. This private estate was far enough away from the explosion so that its bamboos, pines, laurel, and maples were still alive, and the green place invited refugees—partly because they believed that if the Americans came back, they would bomb only buildings; partly because the foliage seemed a center of coolness and life, and the estate's exquisitely precise rock gardens, with their quiet pools and arching bridges, were very Japanese, normal, secure; and also partly (according to some who were there) because of an irresistible, atavistic urge to hide under leaves. Mrs. Nakamura and her children were among the first to arrive, and they settled in the bamboo grove near the river. They all felt terribly thirsty, and they drank from the river. At once they were nauseated and began vomiting, and they retched the whole day. Others were also nauseated; they all thought (probably because of the strong odor of ionization, an "electric smell" given off by the bomb's fission) that they were sick from a gas the Americans had dropped. When Father Kleinsorge and the other priests came into the park, nodding to their friends as they passed, the Nakamuras were all sick and prostrate. A woman named Iwasaki, who lived in the neighborhood of the mission and who was sitting near the Nakamuras, got up and asked the priests if she should stay where she was or go with them. Father Kleinsorge said, "I hardly know where the safest place is." She stayed there, and later in the day, though she had no visible wounds or burns, she died. The priests went farther along the river and settled down in some underbrush. Father LaSalle lay down and went right to sleep. The theological student, who was wearing slippers, had carried with him a bundle of clothes, in which he had packed two pairs of leather shoes. When he sat down with the others, he found that the bundle had broken open and a couple of shoes had fallen out and now he had only two lefts. He retraced his steps and found one right. When he rejoined the priests, he said, "It's funny, but things don't matter anymore. Yesterday, my shoes were my most important possessions. Today, I don't care. One pair is enough."

Father Cieslik said, "I know. I started to bring my books along, and then I thought, 'This is no time for books.' "

When Mr. Tanimoto reached the park, it was very crowded, and to distinguish the living from the dead was not easy, for most of the people lay still, with their eyes open. To Father Kleinsorge, an Occidental, the silence in the grove by the river, where hundreds of gruesomely wounded suffered together, was one of the most dreadful and awesome phenomena of his whole experience. The hurt ones were quiet; no one wept, much less screamed in pain; no one complained; none of the many who died did so noisily; not even the children cried; very few people even spoke. And when Father Kleinsorge gave water to some whose faces had been almost blotted out by flash burns, they took their share and then raised themselves a little and bowed to him, in thanks.

Mr. Tanimoto greeted the priests and then looked around for other friends. He saw Mrs. Matsumoto, wife of the director of the Methodist School, and asked her if she was thirsty. She was, so he went to one of the pools in the Asanos' rock gardens and got water for her. Then he decided to try to get back to his church. He went into Nobori-cho by the way the priests had taken as they escaped, but he did not get far; the fire along the streets was so fierce that he had to turn back. He walked to the riverbank and began to look for a boat in which he might carry some of the most severely injured across the river from

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HERSEY AND HISTORY

John Hersey's "Hiroshima," which famously constituted the entire editorial contents of this magazine's issue of August 31, 1946, is a work of sustained silence. Its appearance, just over a year after the destruction of the Japanese city in the first atomic attack, offered one of the first detailed accounts of the effects of nuclear warfare on its survivors, in a prose so stripped of mannerism, sentimentality, and even minimal emphasis as to place each reader alone within scenes laid bare of all but pain. The piece tells the stories of six people—two doctors, two women, a Protestant clergyman, and a German Jesuit priest—as they experience the bomb, suffer injuries, and struggle for survival in the nightmarish landscape of ruin and death, and does so with classical restraint. Hersey never attempts to "humanize" these victims but instead allows them to keep their formal titles—Mrs. Nakamura, Dr. Fujii, Father Kleinsorge, and so on—throughout, thus clothing them once again in the privacy and individuality that the war and the bomb have blown away. This was not the way we in America were accustomed to thinking about Japanese citizens, whether seen as the hated enemy or the faceless dead, in the mid-nineteen-forties.

"Hiroshima" is a short piece, given its concerns, and was read everywhere, one may assume, at a single sitting. Its thirty-one thousand words suffice because they abstain from the smallest judgment or moral positioning, and leave the reader to deal with the consequences and the questions. Nothing in the work has been dramatized, but many individual scenes begin with a simple few words—"Early that day," "It began to rain," "Some time later"—that sound like stage directions. Indeed, the meticulous, restrained flow of Hersey's words, the slow conversations of his handful of characters, and the flattened, burned-out scenery of the destroyed city contrive to shift the piece from contemporary war reporting to what feels like ancient tragedy. In the same way, the decision to run the piece intact in *The New Yorker*, with no other text (William Shawn, then the managing editor, conceived the idea and persuaded Harold Ross to go along with it), cleared its setting of familiar and reassuring distractions. What happened at Hiroshima is all that we are allowed to think about.

It is difficult, in this news-drenched age, to imagine how "Hiroshima" was received in its time. Newspapers everywhere devoted lead editorials to it and reprinted front-page excerpts, while the American Broadcasting Company had the piece read aloud (this was just before the television age), over national radio, across four successive evenings. The article became a book, and the book has sold more than three and a half million copies and remains in print to this day. Its story became a part of our ceaseless thinking about world wars and nuclear holocaust. Neither of these disasters has come to pass in the past fifty years, and that long and unexpected silence, one must conclude, found its beginning in the murmurous eloquence of John Hersey's report.

—Roger Angell

Asano Park and away from the spreading fire. Soon he found a good-sized pleasure punt drawn up on the bank, but in and around it was an awful tableau—five dead men, nearly naked, badly burned, who must have expired more or less all at once, for they were in attitudes which suggested that they had been working together to push the boat down into the river. Mr. Tanimoto lifted them away from the boat, and as he did so, he experienced such horror at disturbing the dead—preventing them, he momentarily felt, from launching their craft and going on their ghostly way—that he said out loud, "Please forgive me for taking this boat. I must use it for others, who are alive." The punt was heavy, but he managed to slide it into the water. There were no oars, and all he could find for propulsion was a thick bamboo pole. He worked the boat upstream to the most crowded part of the park and began to ferry the wounded. He could pack ten or twelve into the boat for each crossing, but as the river was too deep in the center to pole his way across, he had to paddle with the bamboo, and consequently each trip took a very long time. He worked several hours that way.

Early in the afternoon, the fire swept into the woods of Asano Park. The first Mr. Tanimoto knew of it was when, returning in his boat, he saw that a great number of people had moved toward the riverside. On touching the bank, he went up to investigate, and when he saw the fire, he shouted, "All the young men who are not badly hurt come with me!" Father Kleinsorge moved Father Schiffer and Father LaSalle close to the edge of the river and asked people there to get them across if the fire came too near, and then joined Tanimoto's volunteers. Mr. Tanimoto sent some to look for buckets and basins and told others to beat the burning underbrush with their clothes; when utensils were at hand, he formed a bucket chain from one of the pools in the rock gardens. The team fought the fire for more than two hours, and gradually defeated the flames. As Mr. Tanimoto's men worked, the frightened people in the park pressed closer and closer to the river, and finally the mob began to

CHARLES E. MARTIN

force some of the unfortunates who were on the very bank into the water. Among those driven into the river and drowned were Mrs. Matsumoto, of the Methodist School, and her daughter.

When Father Kleinsorge got back after fighting the fire, he found Father Schiffer still bleeding and terribly pale. Some Japanese stood around and stared at him, and Father Schiffer whispered, with a weak smile, "It is as if I were already dead." "Not yet," Father Kleinsorge said. He had brought Dr. Fujii's first-aid kit with him, and he had noticed Dr. Kanda in the crowd, so he sought him out and asked him if he would dress Father Schiffer's bad cuts. Dr. Kanda had seen his wife and daughter dead in the ruins of his hospital; he sat now with his head in his hands. "I can't do anything," he said. Father Kleinsorge bound more bandage around Father Schiffer's head, moved him to a steep place, and settled him so that his head was high, and soon the bleeding diminished.

The roar of approaching planes was heard about this time. Someone in the crowd near the Nakamura family shouted, "It's some Grummans coming to strafe us!" A baker named Nakashima stood up and commanded, "Everyone who is wearing anything white, take it off." Mrs. Nakamura took the blouses off her children, and opened her umbrella and made them get under it. A great number of people, even badly burned ones, crawled into bushes and stayed there until the hum, evidently of a reconnaissance or weather run, died away.

It began to rain. Mrs. Nakamura kept her children under the umbrella. The drops grew abnormally large, and someone shouted, "The Americans are dropping gasoline. They're going to set fire to us!" (This alarm stemmed from one of the theories being passed through the park as to why so much of Hiroshima had burned: it was that a single plane had sprayed gasoline on the city and then somehow set fire to it in one flashing moment.) But the drops were palpably water, and as they fell, the wind grew stronger and stronger, and suddenly—probably because of the tremendous convection set up by the blazing city—a whirlwind ripped through the park. Huge trees crashed down; small ones were uprooted and flew into the air. Higher, a wild array of flat things revolved in the twisting funnel—pieces of iron roofing, papers, doors, strips of matting. Father Kleinsorge put a piece of cloth over Father Schiffer's eyes, so that the feeble man would not think he was going crazy. The gale blew Mrs. Murata, the mission housekeeper, who was sitting close by the river, down the embankment at a shallow, rocky place, and she came out with her bare feet bloody. The vortex moved out onto the river, where it sucked up a waterspout and eventually spent itself.

After the storm, Mr. Tanimoto began ferrying people again, and Father Kleinsorge asked the theological student to go across and make his way out to the Jesuit Novitiate at Nagatsuka, about three miles from the center of town, and to request the priests there to come with help for Fathers Schiffer and LaSalle. The student got into Mr. Tanimoto's boat and went off with him. Father Kleinsorge asked Mrs. Nakamura if she would like to go out to Nagatsuka with the priests when they came. She said she had some luggage and her children were sick—they were still vomiting from time to time, and so, for that matter, was she—and therefore she feared she could not. He said he thought the fathers from the Novitiate could come back the next day with a pushcart to get her.

Late in the afternoon, when he went ashore for a while, Mr. Tanimoto, upon whose energy and initiative many had come to depend, heard people begging for food. He consulted Father Kleinsorge, and they decided to go back into town to get some rice from Mr. Tanimoto's Neighborhood Association shelter and from the mission shelter. Father Cieslik and two or three others went with them. At first, when they got among the rows of prostrate houses, they did not know where they were; the change was too sudden, from a busy city of two hundred and forty-five thousand that morning to a mere pattern of residue in the afternoon. The asphalt of the streets was still so soft and hot from the fires that walking was uncomfortable. They encountered only one person, a woman, who said to them as they passed, "My husband is in those ashes." At the mission, where Mr. Tanimoto left the party, Father Kleinsorge was dismayed to see the building razed. In the garden, on the way to the shelter, he noticed a pumpkin roasted on the vine. He and Father Cieslik tasted it and it was good. They were surprised at their hunger, and they ate quite a bit. They got out several bags of rice and gathered up several other cooked pumpkins and dug up some potatoes that were nicely baked under the ground, and started back. Mr. Tanimoto rejoined them on the way. One of the people with him had some cooking utensils. In the park, Mr. Tanimoto organized the lightly wounded women of his neighborhood to cook. Father Kleinsorge offered the Nakamura family some pumpkin, and they tried it, but they could not keep it on their stomachs. Altogether, the rice was enough to feed nearly a hundred people.

JUST before dark, Mr. Tanimoto came across a twenty-year-old girl, Mrs. Kamai, the Tanimotos' next-door neighbor. She was crouching on the ground with the body of her infant daughter in her arms. The baby had evidently been dead all day. Mrs. Kamai jumped up when she saw Mr. Tanimoto and said, "Would you please try to locate my husband?"

Mr. Tanimoto knew that her husband had been inducted into the Army just the day before; he and Mrs. Tanimoto had entertained Mrs. Kamai in the afternoon, to make her forget. Kamai had reported to the Chugoku Regional Army Headquarters—near the ancient castle in the middle of town—where some four thousand troops were stationed. Judging by the many maimed soldiers Mr. Tanimoto had seen during the day, he surmised that the barracks had been badly damaged by whatever it was that had hit Hiroshima. He knew he hadn't a chance of finding Mrs. Kamai's husband, even if he searched, but he wanted to humor her. "I'll try," he said.

"You've got to find him," she said. "He loved our baby so much. I want him to see her once more." ◆

FICTION

THE ZOO ATTACK

BY HARUKI MURAKAMI

HER tone calm and steady, Nutmeg Akasaka told me the story of the tigers, the leopards, the wolves, and the bears that were shot by soldiers on a miserably hot afternoon in August, 1945. She narrated with such order and clarity that I felt as if I were watching a documentary film of the events. She left nothing vague. Yet she herself had not actually witnessed the spectacle. While it was happening, she was standing on the deck of a transport ship carrying refugee settlers home to Japan from Manchuria. What she had actually witnessed was the surfacing of an American submarine.

Like everyone else, she and the other children had come up from the unbearable steam bath of the ship's hold to lean against the deck rail and enjoy the gentle breezes that moved across the calm, unbroken sea, when, all at once, the submarine came floating to the surface as if it were part of a dream. First the radio and radar antennas and the periscope broke the surface. Then the conning tower came up, raising a wake as it cut through the water. And finally the entire dripping mass of steel exposed its graceful nakedness to the summer sun.

The submarine ran parallel to the ship for a while, as if stalking its prey. Soon a hatch opened, and one crew member, then another and another climbed onto the deck, moving slowly, almost sluggishly. From the conning-tower deck, the officers examined every detail of the transport ship through huge binoculars, whose lenses would flash every now and then in the sunlight. The transport ship was full of civilians heading back to Japan, their destination the port of Sasebo. The majority were women and children, the families of Japanese officials in the puppet Manchukuo government and of high-ranking personnel of the Japanese-owned South Manchuria Railway, fleeing to the homeland from the chaos that would follow the Soviet entry into the war against Japan. Rather than face the inevitable horror, they had been willing to accept the risk of attack by an American submarine on the open sea—until now, at least.

The submarine officers were checking to see if the transport ship was unarmed and without a naval escort. They had nothing to fear. The Americans now had command of the air, too. Okinawa had fallen, and Japan had pulled in its fighter planes to defend the home islands. No need for the Americans to panic: time was on their side. A petty officer barked orders, and three sailors spun the cranks that turned the deck gun until it was aimed at the transport ship. Two other crewmen opened the rear-deck hatch and hauled up heavy shells to feed the gun. Yet another squad of crewmen, with practiced movements, were loading a machine gun they had set on a raised part of the deck near the conning tower.

That and the deck gun were more than enough to sink the rotting old freighter that had been refitted as a transport ship. The submarine carried only a limited number of torpedoes, and these had to be reserved for encounters with armed convoys.

The crew all wore combat helmets, though a few of the men were naked from the waist up and nearly half were wearing short pants. If she stared hard at them, Nutmeg could see brilliant tattoos inscribed on their arms. If she stared hard, she could see lots of things. She clung to the deck rail and watched as the gun's black barrel pivoted in her direction. Dripping wet only moments earlier, it had been baked dry in the summer sun. At home in Hsin-ching, she had never seen such an enormous gun.

The submarine flashed a signal lamp at the freighter: "Heave to. Attack to commence. Immediately evacuate all passengers to lifeboats." (Nutmeg could not read the signal lamp, of course, but in retrospect she understood it perfectly.) But there were not enough lifeboats aboard the transport ship. In fact, there were only two small boats for more than five hundred passengers and crew members. There were hardly any life vests or life buoys aboard.

Gripping the deck rail, holding her breath, Nutmeg stared transfixed at the streamlined submarine. It shone as if brand-new, without a speck of rust. She saw the white-painted numerals on the conning tower. She saw the radar antenna rotating above it. She saw the sandy-haired officer with dark glasses. This submarine has come up from the bottom of the ocean to kill us all, she thought, but there's nothing strange about that, it could happen anytime. It has nothing to do with the war; it could happen to anyone anywhere. Everybody thinks it's happening because of the war. But that's not true. The war is just one of the things that could happen.

Face to face with the submarine and its huge gun, Nutmeg felt no trace of fear. Her mother was shouting at her, but the words made no sense. Then she felt something grab her wrists and pull on them. But her hands stayed locked on the deck rail. The roar of voices all around her began to move far away, as if someone were turning down the volume on a radio. I'm so sleepy, she thought. So sleepy. Why am I so sleepy? She closed her eyes, and her consciousness rushed away, leaving the deck far behind.

NUTMEG was seeing Japanese soldiers as they moved through the extensive zoo, shooting any animal that could attack human beings. The officer gave his order, and the bullets from the Model 38 rifles ripped through the smooth hide of a tiger, tearing at the animal's guts. The summer sky was

LAURIE ROSENWALD

blue, and from the surrounding trees the screams of cicadas rained down like a sudden shower.

The soldiers never spoke. The blood was gone from their sunburned faces. They looked like pictures painted on ancient urns. A few days from now—at most, a week—the main force of the Soviet Far East Command would arrive in Hsin-ching. There was no way to stop the advance. Ever since the war began, the crack troops and once abundant equipment of the Kwantung Army had been drained away to support the widening southern front, and now the greater part of both had sunk to the bottom of the sea or was rotting in the depths of the jungle. The tanks were gone. The anti-tank guns were gone. All but a handful of the troop transport trucks had broken down, and there were no spare parts. Large numbers of troops remained, but there were not enough rifles left to arm every man, nor bullets enough to load every rifle. The great Kwantung Army, Bulwark of the North, had been reduced to a paper tiger. The proud Soviet mechanized units that had crushed the German Army were completing their transfer by rail to the Far Eastern front, with plenty of equipment and with spirits high. The collapse of Manchukuo was imminent.

Everyone knew this to be the truth, the Kwantung Army command most of all. And so the generals evacuated their main force to the rear, in effect abandoning both the small border garrisons and the Japanese civilian homesteaders. These unarmed farmers were slaughtered by the Soviet Army, which was advancing too rapidly to take prisoners. Many women chose—or were forced to choose—mass suicide over rape. Members of the general staff and other high-ranking officers arranged to have themselves "transferred" to new headquarters in Tonghua, near the Korean border, and the puppet emperor Henry Pu-yi and his family threw everything they could get their hands on into trunks and left Hsin-ching by private train. Most of the Chinese soldiers in the Manchukuo Army units assigned to defend the capital deserted as soon as they heard the Soviets were invading, or else they staged revolts and shot their Japanese commanding officers. They had no intention of laying down their lives for Japan in a struggle against superior Soviet troops.

THE eight soldiers dispatched to the zoo had resigned themselves to their fate. A few days hence, they assumed, they would die fighting the Soviet Army. All they could do was pray that their deaths would not be too painful. None of them wanted to be crushed under the treads of a slow-moving tank or roasted in a trench by flamethrowers or die by degrees with a bullet in the stomach. Better to be shot in the head or the heart. But first they had to kill these animals in the zoo.

If possible, they were to kill the animals with poison in order to conserve what few bullets they had left. The young lieutenant in charge of the operation had been so instructed by his superior officer and told that the zoo had been given enough poison to do the job.

The zoo's director confirmed that he indeed had orders to "liquidate" the fiercer animals in case of an emergency and to use poison, but the shipment of poison, he said, had never arrived. When the lieutenant heard this, he became confused. He was an accountant assigned to the paymaster's office, and until he was dragged away from his desk at headquarters for this emergency detail he had never once been put in charge of a detachment of men.

"Bureaucratic work is always like this, Lieutenant," said the zoo director, a man several years his senior, who looked at him with a touch of pity. "The things you need are never there."

To check further into the matter, the director called in the zoo's chief veterinarian, a tall, handsome man in his late thirties. The veterinarian told the lieutenant that the zoo had only a very small amount of poison, probably not enough to kill a horse.

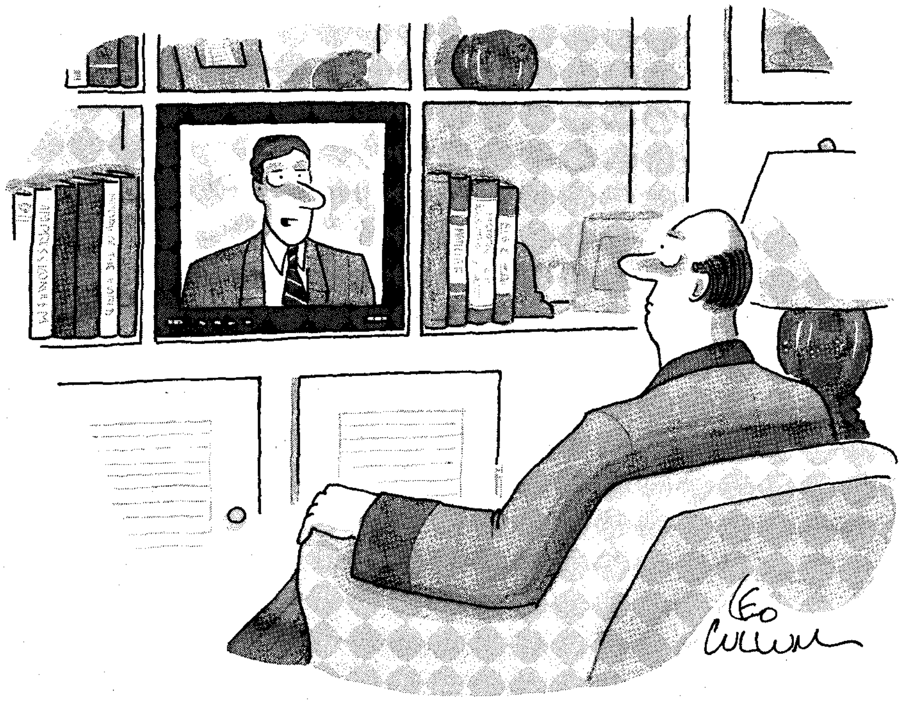
The lieutenant telephoned headquarters for instructions, but since the Soviet Army had crossed the border several days earlier, most of the high-ranking officers had disappeared. The few remaining had their hands full burning documents or leading troops out to dig anti-tank trenches. The major who had given the lieutenant his orders was nowhere to be found. The call was transferred from one office to another until a medical-corps colonel got on the line, only to scream at the lieutenant, "You stupid son of a bitch! The whole goddam country's going down the drain and you're asking me about a goddam fucking zoo? Who gives a shit?"

Who indeed? thought the lieutenant. Certainly not he. Now he was faced with two options. He could forget about killing any animals and lead his men out of there, or they could use bullets to do the job. Either would be a violation of the orders he had been given, but in the end he decided to do the shooting. That way, he might later be reprimanded for having wasted valuable ammunition, but at least the goal of liquidating the more dangerous animals would have been met. If, on the other hand, he chose not to kill the animals, he might be court-martialled for having failed to carry out orders. There was some doubt whether there would even be any courts-martial at this late stage of the war, but, after all, orders were orders. So long as the Army continued to exist, its orders had to be carried out.

If possible, I'd rather not kill any animals, the lieutenant told himself in all honesty. But the zoo was running out of things to feed them, and most of the animals (especially the big ones) were already suffering from starvation. Shooting might even be easier for the animals themselves—a quick, clean death. And if starving animals were to escape to the city streets during intense fighting or air strikes, a disaster would be unavoidable.

The director then handed the lieutenant a list of animals for "emergency liquidation" that he had been instructed to compile, along with a map of the zoo. The handsome veterinarian and two Chinese workers were assigned to accompany the firing squad. The lieutenant glanced at the list and was relieved to find it shorter than he had imagined. Among the animals slated for liquidation, though, were two Indian elephants. "Elephants?" the lieutenant gasped. How in the hell are we supposed to kill elephants? he thought. We'd need a tank for that.

Given the layout of the zoo, the first animals to be liquidated were the tigers. The elephants would be left for last, in any case. The plaque on the tiger cage



"On a personal note, my wife, Ann, and I have agreed to separate, as I've fallen in love with the sound of my own voice."

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explained that the pair had been captured in Manchuria in the Greater Khingan mountains. The lieutenant assigned four men to each tiger and told them to aim for the heart—the whereabouts of which was just another mystery to him. Oh, well, at least one bullet was bound to hit home. When eight men together pulled back on the levers of their Model 38s and loaded a cartridge into each chamber, the ominous, dry clicks transformed the whole atmosphere of the place. The tigers stood up at the sound. Glaring at the soldiers through the iron bars, they let out huge roars. As an extra precaution, the lieutenant drew his own automatic pistol and released the safety. To calm himself, he cleared his throat. This is nothing, he tried to tell himself. Everybody does stuff like this all the time.

The soldiers knelt, took careful aim, and, at the lieutenant's command, pulled their triggers. The recoil shook their shoulders, and for a moment their minds went empty, as if flicked away. The roar of the simultaneous shots reverberated through the deserted zoo, echoing from building to building, wall to wall, slicing through wooded areas, crossing water surfaces, a stab to the hearts of all who heard it, like distant thunder. The animals held their breath. Even the cicadas stopped crying. Long after the echo of gunfire faded into the distance, there was not a sound to be heard. As if they had been whacked with a huge club by an invisible giant, the tigers shot up into the air for a moment, then landed on the floor of the cage with a great thud, writhing in agony, vomiting blood. The soldiers had failed to finish the tigers off with a single volley. They snapped out of their trance and pulled back on their rifle levers, ejecting spent shells and taking aim again.

The lieutenant sent one of his men into the cage to verify that both tigers were dead. They certainly looked dead—eyes closed, teeth bared, all movement gone. The veterinarian unlocked the cage, and the young soldier (he had just turned twenty) stepped inside fearfully, thrusting his bayonet ahead of him. It was an odd performance, but no one laughed. He gave a slight kick to one tiger's hindquarters with the heel of his boot. The tiger remained motionless. He kicked the same spot again, this time a little harder. The tiger was dead without a doubt. The other tiger, the female, lay equally still. The young soldier had never visited a zoo in his life, nor had he ever seen a real tiger before. He felt only that he had been dragged into a place that had nothing to do with him and had been forced to perform an act there that had nothing to do with him. Standing in an ocean of black blood, he stared down at the tigers' corpses, entranced. They looked much bigger dead than they had alive. Why should that be? he asked himself, mystified.

The cage's concrete floor was suffused with the piercing smell of the big cats' urine, and mixed with it was the warm odor of blood. Blood was still gushing from the holes torn in the tigers' bodies, forming a sticky black pond around his feet. All of a sudden, the rifle in his hands felt heavy and cold. He wanted to fling it away, bend down, and vomit the entire contents of his stomach onto the floor. What a relief it would have been! But vomiting was out of the question—the squad leader would beat his face out of shape. (Of course, this soldier had no idea that he would die seventeen months later when a Soviet guard in a mine near Irkutsk split his skull open with a shovel.) He wiped the sweat from his forehead with the back of his wrist. His helmet was weighing down upon him. One cicada, then another began to cry again, as if finally revived. Soon their cries were joined by those of a bird—strangely distinctive cries, like the winding of a spring: *Creeeak. Creeeak.* When he was twelve, the young soldier had moved with his parents from a mountain village in Hokkaido across the sea to China, and together they had tilled the soil of a frontier village in Bei'an until a year ago, when he was drafted into the Army. Thus he knew all the birds of Manchuria, but, strangely, he had never heard a bird with that particular cry. Perhaps it was a bird imported from a distant land crying in its cage in another part of the zoo. Yet the sound seemed to come from the upper branches of a nearby tree.

He looked toward the lieutenant as if requesting instructions. The lieutenant nodded, ordered him out of the cage, and spread open the zoo map again. So much for the tigers, he thought. Next, we'll do the leopards. Then, maybe, the wolves. We've got bears to deal with, too. We'll think about the elephants when the others are done. And then he realized how hot it was. "Take a breather," he said to his men. "Have some water." They drank from their canteens. Then they shouldered their rifles, took their places in formation, and headed for the leopard cage. The unknown bird with the insistent call went on winding its spring. The chests and backs of the men's short-sleeved military shirts were stained black with sweat. As this formation of fully armed soldiers strode along, the clanking of all kinds of metallic objects sent hollow echoes throughout the deserted zoo. The monkeys clinging to the bars of their cages rent the air with their screams, sending frantic warnings to all the other animals, who joined the chorus in their own distinctive ways. The wolves sent long howls skyward, the birds contributed a wild flapping of wings, a large animal somewhere was slamming itself against its cage as if to send out a threat. A chunk of cloud shaped like a fist appeared out of nowhere and hid the sun for a short time. On that August afternoon, people, animals, everyone was thinking about death. Today, the men would be killing the animals; tomorrow, Soviet troops would be killing the men. Probably.

THE woman and I always sat across from each other at the same table in the same restaurant, talking. She was a regular there, and, of course, she always picked up the tab. With the kind of money I had, I probably couldn't have afforded an appetizer in such a place. The back part of the restaurant was divided into private compartments, so that the conversation at any one table could not be heard at another. There was only one seating per evening there, which meant that we could talk at leisure, right up to closing time, without interference from anyone—including the waiters, who approached the table only to bring or clear a dish. She would always order a bottle of Burgundy of one particular vintage and always leave half the bottle unconsumed.

"A bird that winds a spring?" I asked, looking up from my food.

"A bird that winds a spring?" said the woman, who called herself Nutmeg. She repeated the words exactly as I had said them, then curled her lips just a little. "I don't understand what you're saying. What are you talking about?"

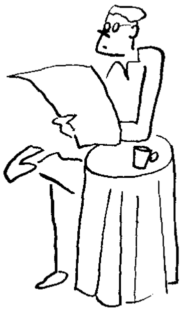
I took a sip of wine and wiped my mouth. "Wait a minute, didn't you just say something about a bird winding a spring?"

She shook her head slowly. "Hmm, now I can't remember. I don't think I said anything about a bird. A bird winding a spring? You mean some kind of toy bird?"

I could see it was hopeless. She always told her stories like this.

"So you were born in Manchuria, then?" I asked.

She shook her head again. "I was born here, in Yokohama. My parents took me to Manchuria when I was three. My father was teaching at a school of veterinary medicine, but when the Hsin-ching city administrators wanted someone sent over from Japan as chief veterinarian for the new zoo they were going to build, he volunteered for the job. My mother didn't want to abandon the settled life they had in Japan and go off to the ends of the earth, but my father insisted. Maybe he wanted to test himself in some place bigger and more open than Japan. I was so young it didn't matter where I was, but I really enjoyed living at the zoo. It was a wonderful life. My father always smelled like the animals. All the different animal smells would mix together into one, and it would be a little different each day, like changing the blend of ingredients in a perfume. I'd climb onto his lap when he came home and make him sit still while I smelled him. If only that life could have gone on forever—how happy I would have been!



"But then the war turned bad, and things got threatening, so my father decided to send my mother and me back to Japan before it was too late. We went with a lot of other people, taking the train from Hsin-ching to Korea, where a special boat was waiting for us. My father stayed behind in Hsin-ching. The last time I ever saw him, he was standing in the station, waving to us. I stuck my head out the window and watched him getting smaller and smaller until he disappeared into the crowd on the platform. No one knows what happened to him after that. He just evaporated, like smoke. We tried asking friends from Hsin-ching who escaped to Japan after us, but it was almost weird how no one knew anything about him. I think he must have been taken prisoner by the Soviets and sent to Siberia to do forced labor and, like so many others, died over there. He's probably buried in some cold, lonely patch of earth without anything to mark his grave. He was just an ordinary civilian—there was no reason for him to be hauled away like that, but it was a confusing time. Lots of mistakes were made.

"I still remember everything about the Hsin-ching zoo in perfect detail. I can bring it all back inside my head—every pathway, every animal. We lived in the chief veterinarian's official residence, in a corner of the zoo. All the zoo workers knew me, and they let me go anywhere I wanted—even on holidays, when the zoo was closed. On those days, the whole place belonged to me alone. You can't imagine what a wonderful feeling that was! It was my universe. To me, the zoo was reality—just the opposite of how it is for ordinary people."

Nutmeg closed her eyes to bring back the scene inside her mind. I waited, without speaking, for her to continue her story.

"Still, though, I can't be sure if the zoo as I recall it was really like that. How can I put it? I sometimes feel that it's too vivid, if you know what I mean. And when I start having thoughts like this, the more I think about it the less I can tell how much of the vividness is real and how much of it is an effect of my imagination. I feel as if I've wandered into a labyrinth. Has that ever happened to you?"

It had not. "Do you know if the zoo is still there in Hsin-ching?" I asked.

"I wonder," said Nutmeg, touching the tip of her earring. "I heard that the place was closed up after the war, but I have no idea if it's still closed. The city isn't called Hsin-ching anymore, though. Now it's Changchun. But if the zoo is still there I'd like to go and see how much of what I remember is real and how much I've made up in my head. I'd like to know if there really were elephants there. And leopards and tigers and bears. And whether they were really killed by soldiers in the summer of 1945. But, I don't know, maybe nobody really knows the truth."

THEY killed the leopards. They killed the wolves. They killed the bears. Shooting the bears took the most time. Even after the two gigantic animals had taken dozens of rifle slugs, they continued to crash against the bars of their cage, roaring at the men and slobbering, fangs bared. Unlike the cats, who were more willing to accept their fate (or who at least appeared to accept it), the bears seemed unable to comprehend the fact that they were being killed. When, at long last, the soldiers finally succeeded in extinguishing all signs of life in the bears, they were so exhausted they were ready to collapse on the spot. The lieutenant reset his pistol's safety catch and used his hat to wipe the sweat dripping from his brow. In the deep silence that followed the killing, several of the soldiers seemed to be trying to mask their feelings of shame by spitting loudly on the ground. Spent shells were scattered about their feet like so many cigarette butts. Their ears still rang with the crackling of their rifles. The young soldier who would be beaten to death by a Soviet soldier seventeen months later in a coal mine near Irkutsk took several deep breaths in succession, averting his gaze from the bears' corpses. He was engaged in a fierce struggle to force back the nausea that had worked its way up to his throat.

In the end, they did not kill the elephants. Once they actually confronted them, it became obvious that the beasts were simply too large, that the soldiers' rifles looked like silly toys in their presence. The lieutenant considered, and then decided to leave the elephants alone. Hearing this, the men breathed a sigh of relief. Strange as it may seem—or perhaps it does not seem so strange—they all had the same thought: it was much easier to kill humans on the battlefield than animals in cages, even if, on the battlefield, one might end up being killed oneself.

Those animals that were now nothing but corpses were dragged out of their cages by the Chinese workers, loaded onto carts, and hauled to an empty warehouse. There the animals, which came in so many shapes and sizes, were lined up on the floor. Once he had seen the operation through to its end, the lieutenant returned to the zoo director's office and had the man sign the necessary documents. Then the soldiers lined up and marched away in formation, with the same metallic clanking they had made when they came. The Chinese workers used hoses to wash off the black stains of blood on the floors of the cages, and with brushes they scrubbed away the occasional chunk of animal flesh that clung to the walls. When this job was finished, the workers asked the veterinarian how he intended to dispose of the corpses. The doctor was at a loss for an answer. Ordinarily, when an animal died at the zoo, he would call a professional to do the job. But with the capital now bracing for a bloody battle, with people now struggling to be the first to leave this doomed city, you couldn't just make a phone call and get someone to run over to dispose of an animal corpse for you. Summer was at its height, though, and the corpses would begin to decompose quickly. Even now, black swarms of flies were massing. The best thing would be to bury them—an enormous job even if the zoo had access to heavy equipment, but with the limited help available to them now it would obviously be impossible to dig holes large enough to take all the corpses.

The Chinese workers said to the veterinarian, "Doctor, if you will let us take the corpses whole, we will dispose of them for you. We have plenty of friends to help us, and we know exactly where to do the job. We will haul them outside the city and get rid of every last speck. We will not cause you any problems. But, in exchange, we want the hides and meat. Especially the bear meat—everybody will want that. Parts of bear and tiger are good for medicine—they will command a high price. And though it's too late now to say this, we wish you had aimed only at their heads. Then the hides would have been worth a good deal more. The soldiers were such amateurs! If only you had let us take care of it from the beginning, we wouldn't have done such a clumsy job." The veterinarian agreed to the bargain. He had no choice. After all, it was their country.

Before long, ten Chinese appeared, pulling several empty carts behind them. They dragged the animals' corpses out of the warehouse, piled them onto the carts, tied them down, and covered them with straw mats. They hardly said a word to one another the whole time. Their faces were expressionless. When they had finished loading the carts, they dragged them off somewhere. The old carts creaked with the strain of supporting the animals' weight. All that was left in the zoo was several clean—and empty—cages. Still in an agitated state, the monkeys kept calling out to one another in their incomprehensible language. The badgers rushed back and forth in their narrow cage. The birds flapped their wings in desperation, scattering feathers all around. And the cicadas kept up their grating cry.

After the soldiers had finished their killing and returned to headquarters, and after the last two Chinese workers had disappeared somewhere, dragging their cart loaded with animal corpses, the zoo took on the hollow quality of a house emptied of furniture. The veterinarian sat on the rim of a waterless fountain, looked up at the sky, and watched the group of hard-edged clouds that were floating there. He took a sweat-dampened pack of cigarettes from his breast pocket, put a cigarette in his mouth, and struck a match. As he lit up, he realized that his hand was trembling—so much that it took him three matches to light the cigarette. Not that he had experienced an emotional trauma. A large number of animals had been liquidated in a moment before his eyes, and yet, for some inexplicable reason, he felt no particular shock or sadness or anger. In fact, he felt almost nothing. He was just terribly puzzled. He sat there for a while, watching the smoke curl upward from his cigarette, trying to sort out his feelings. He stared at his hands resting on his lap, then looked once again at the clouds in the sky. The world he saw before him looked the way it always had. And yet it ought to have been a world distinctly different from the one he had known until then. After all, the world that held him now was a world in which bears and tigers and leopards and wolves had been liquidated. Those animals had existed this morning, but now, at four o'clock in the afternoon, they had ceased to exist. They had been massacred by soldiers, and even their dead bodies were nowhere—as if a light switch had been flipped.

There should have been a decisive gap separating those two different worlds. Because in that world the tigers existed, but in this world they did not. It was a crucial difference for him, for the chief veterinarian of the Hsinching zoo, for the man who had taken care of those animals ever since the zoo opened. . . . The gap should have been vast enough to shake the very foundations of his being. What most puzzled the veterinarian was the unfamiliar absence of feeling inside him.

Suddenly he realized that he was exhausted. Come to think of it, he had hardly slept at all the night before. How wonderful it would be, he thought, if I could find the cool shade of a tree somewhere, to stretch out and sleep, if only for a little while—to stop thinking, to sink into the silent darkness of unconsciousness. He glanced at his watch. He had to secure food for the surviving animals. He had to treat the baboon that was running a high fever. There were a thousand things he had to do. He was going to have to keep this zoo running almost single-handed from now on (until who knew when). But now, more than anything, he had to sleep. What came afterward he could think about afterward.

The veterinarian stood up from the rim of the fountain, walked into a neighboring wooded area, and stretched out on the grass where no one would notice him. The shaded grass felt cool and good. The smell was something he remembered fondly from his childhood. Several large Manchurian grasshoppers bounded over his face with a nice, strong hum. He lit another cigarette as he lay there, and he was pleased to see that his hands were no longer trembling so badly. Inhaling the smoke deep into his lungs, he pictured the Chinese men stripping the hides off all those freshly killed animals somewhere and cutting up the meat. He had often seen people here doing work like that, and he knew they were anything but clumsy. In a matter of moments, an animal would be reduced to hide, meat, organs, and bones, as if those elements had originally been quite separate and had just happened to come together for a little while. He thought, By the time I wake from my nap, I'm sure, those pieces of meat will be out there in the marketplace. That's reality for you—quick and efficient. He tore off a handful of grass and toyed with its softness awhile. Then he crushed his cigarette and, with a deep sigh, expelled all the smoke left in his lungs. When he closed his eyes, the grasshoppers' wings sounded much louder. The veterinarian felt as if grasshoppers the size of bullfrogs were leaping all around him.

"It's the loony bin. They want to know if you're coming back."

• •

Maybe the world was like a revolving door: this thought occurred to him as his consciousness was fading away. And which section you ended up in was just a matter of where your foot happened to fall. There were tigers in one section, but no tigers in another. Maybe it was as simple as that. And there was no logical continuity from one section to another. And it was precisely because of this lack of logical continuity that choices really didn't mean very much. Wasn't that why he couldn't feel the gap between one world and another? But that was as far as his thoughts would go. The fatigue in his body was as heavy and suffocating as a sodden blanket. No more thoughts came to him, and he just lay there, inhaling the aroma of the grass, listening to the grasshoppers' wings, and feeling through his skin the dense membrane of shadow that covered him.

And in the end his mind was sucked into the deep sleep of afternoon.

THE transport ship cut its engines, as ordered, and soon it came to a standstill on the surface of the ocean. The submarine's deck gun and machine gun were still trained on the transport ship, its crew in a state of readiness to attack. Yet a strange tranquillity hovered between the two ships. The men on the submarine stood in full view on deck, lined up and watching the transport ship with an air of having time to kill. Many of them had not even bothered to strap on battle helmets. There was hardly any wind that summer afternoon, and now, with both engines cut, the only sound was the languid slap of waves against the two ships' hulls. The transport ship signalled to the submarine, "We are a transport ship carrying unarmed civilians. We have neither munitions nor military personnel on board. We have few lifeboats." To this the submarine responded brusquely, "That is not our problem. Evacuation or no, we commence firing in precisely ten minutes."

This ended the exchange of signal messages between the two ships. The captain of the transport ship decided not to convey the communication to his passengers. What good would it do? A few of them might be lucky enough to survive, but most would be dragged to the bottom of the sea with this miserable old washtub. The captain longed for one last drink, but the whiskey bottle was in a desk drawer in his cabin, and there was no time to get it now. He took off his hat and looked up at the sky. He was hoping that, through some miracle, a squadron of Japanese fighter planes might suddenly appear there. But this was not to be a day for miracles. The captain thought about his whiskey again.

As the ten minutes was running out, strange movement began on the deck of the submarine. There were hurried exchanges among the officers lined up on the conning-tower deck, and one of the officers scrambled down to the main deck and ran among the crew, shouting some kind of order. Wherever he went, ripples of movement spread among the men at their battle stations. One sailor shook his head from side to side and punched the barrel of the deck gun with a clenched fist. Another took his helmet off and stared up at the sky. The men's actions might have been expressing anger or joy or disappointment or excitement. The passengers on the transport found it impossible to tell what was happening or what this was leading to. Like an audience watching a pantomime for which there was no program, they held their breath and kept their eyes locked on the sailors' every movement, hoping to find some small hint of meaning. Eventually, the waves of confusion among the sailors began to subside, and, in response to an order from the bridge, the shells were removed from the deck gun with great dispatch. The men turned cranks and swung the barrel away from the transport ship until the gun was pointing straight ahead again, then they plugged the horrid black hole of the muzzle. The shells were returned below deck and the crew ran for the hatches. In contrast to their earlier movements, they did everything now with speed and efficiency. There was no chatting or wasted motion.

The submarine's engines started with a definite growl, and at almost the same moment the siren screeched to signal "Commence dive!" The submarine began to move forward, and a moment later it was plunging downward, churning up a great white patch of foam, as if it had hardly been able to wait for the men to get below and fasten the hatches. A membrane of seawater swallowed the long, narrow deck from front to rear, the deck gun sank below the surface, the conning tower slipped downward, cutting through the dark-blue water, and finally the antennas and the periscope plunged out of sight as if to rip the air clean of any evidence that they had ever been there.

The transport passengers stood frozen on deck, staring at the watery expanse. Not a throat was cleared, not a limb moved. The captain recovered his presence of mind and gave his order to the navigator, who passed it on to the engine room, and, after a long fit of grinding, the antique engine started up like a sleeping dog kicked by its master.

The crew of the transport ship held their breath, waiting for a torpedo attack. Perhaps the Americans had simply changed their plans, deciding that sinking the ship with a torpedo would be faster and easier than a time-consuming volley from the deck gun. The ship ran in short zigzags, the captain and the navigator scanning the ocean's surface with their binoculars, searching for the deadly white wake of a torpedo. But there was no torpedo. Twenty minutes after the submarine had disappeared beneath the waves, people at last began to break free of the spell that had hung over them. They had come back alive from the verge of death. They could only half believe it at first, but little by little they came to feel that it was true. Not even the captain knew why the Americans had suddenly abandoned their attack. What could have changed their minds? Released now from the unbearable tension, several passengers collapsed where they stood on the deck and began to wail, but most of them could neither cry nor laugh. For several hours—and, in the case of some, for several days—they remained in a state of total abstraction, the spike of a long, twisted nightmare thrust unmercifully into their lungs, their hearts, their spines, their brains, their wombs.

Little Nutmeg Akasaka remained sound asleep in her mother's arms all the time this was happening. She slept for a solid fourteen hours, as if she had been knocked unconscious. Nothing could draw her back from the world of sleep. Her mother shouted and slapped her cheeks to no avail. So deep was her sleep that she might as well have sunk to the bottom of the sea. The intervals between her breaths grew longer and longer, and her pulse slowed. Her breath was all but inaudible. But when the ship arrived in Sasebo she woke without warning, as if some great power had dragged her back into this world. And so, Nutmeg told me, she did not herself witness the events surrounding the aborted attack and the disappearance of the American submarine. Those parts of the story she heard much later, from her mother. Just moments before the attack was to begin, headquarters had radioed the submarine to suspend all hostilities unless attacked by the enemy. The Japanese government had let the Allied powers know that it was prepared to accept the Potsdam Declaration and surrender unconditionally.

The freighter finally limped into the port of Sasebo a little past ten in the morning on August 16th, the day after the non-attack. The port was weirdly silent, and no one came out to greet the ship. Not even at the anti-aircraft emplacement by the harbor mouth were there signs of humanity. The summer sunlight baked the ground with dumb intensity. The whole world seemed caught in a deep paralysis, and some on board felt as if they had stumbled by accident into the land of the dead. After years spent abroad, they could only stare in silence at the country of their ancestors. At a few minutes past noon on August 15th, the radio had broadcast the Emperor's announcement of the war's end. Seven days earlier, the nearby city of Nagasaki had been incinerated by a single atomic bomb. Within a few days' time, the phantom empire of Manchukuo was disappearing into history. And, caught unawares in the wrong section of the revolving door, the handsome veterinarian would share the fate of Manchukuo. ♦

(Translated, from the Japanese, by Jay Rubin.)

Huntington, W. Va.—An inmate who escaped from prison using a rope fashioned out of minty-fresh dental floss drew 30 years behind bars yesterday.—*The News.*

Waxed or unwaxed?

BOOKS

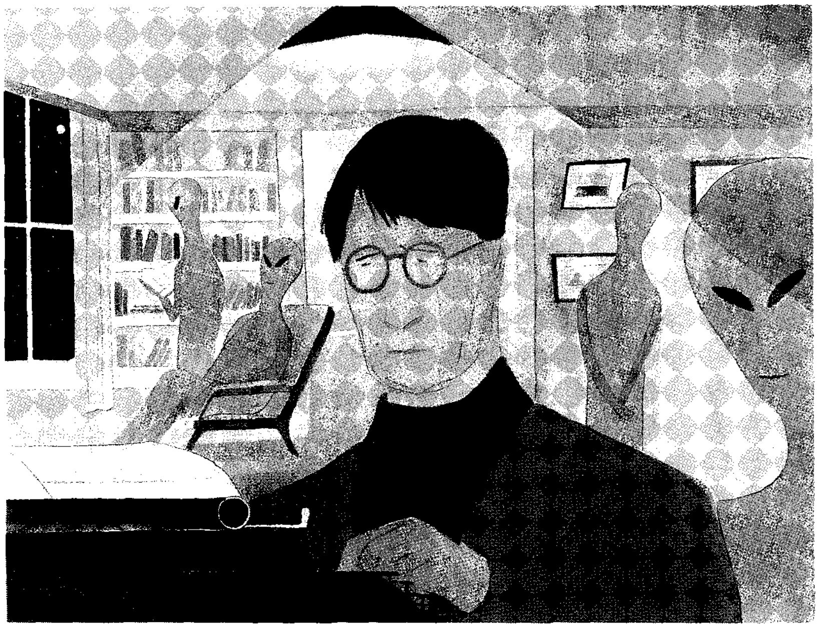
I LOST IT IN THE SAUCER

Strange but true: Ph.D.s get serious about U.F.O.s.

BY JAMES WOLCOTT

Two years ago, I opened my own X-File and began investigating a rumored upsurge in alien abductions. In the past, U.F.O.s and extraterrestrial activity had remained in the realm of freak sightings: lighted craft executing impossible zigzags; burn marks and crop circles; cattle mutilations. But in recent years, U.F.O. watchers contended, alien visitors weren't just barnstorming the night skies; they were dropping by to help themselves to human specimens. Their vehicles were flying research labs, their insides as bright and shiny as a 7-Eleven. The popularity of Whitley Strieber's 1987 best-seller, "Communion," and the tele-film "Intruders," which was based on a book by Budd Hopkins, inspired more and more people to testify that, like the characters in those works, they, too, had been rendered inert, taken aloft, etherized upon a table, and poked by aliens, who came to be known as Small Grays. (Often there was a Tall Gray—a managerial type—on board to supervise.) The victims underwent mind scans; blood, semen, and fetal tissue were extracted from them by medical instruments almost medieval in their primitive force. Some had monitoring devices implanted in their sinus cavities. Many abductees—or "experiencers," as some preferred to be called—underwent regressive-hypnosis therapy to recall the trauma in full Technicolor, and joined support groups.

In 1991, *The Atlantic* published an article about an annual gathering of abductees in Wyoming—an article that hovered over their huddled figures with an almost ghostly deference. (It was like reading about a family reunion in Purgatory.) If a pillar of sweet reason like *The Atlantic* took the phenomenon seriously, I figured, surely it was worthy of study. I was further intrigued to learn that the special-projects director for *The Atlantic*, Karen Wesolowski, was leaving the magazine to work on a project for the study of extraordinary phenomena which was run by Dr. John E. Mack, a professor of psychiatry at the Harvard Medical School and the author of a Pulitzer Prize-winning biography of T. E. Lawrence. Dr. Mack was said to be to alien abduction what R. D. Laing was to schizophrenia: the magnet, the rebel visionary, the throbbing brains.



C. D. B. Bryan puzzles over the new alien-abduction phenomenon: *why would anyone make this stuff up?*

GEOFFREY PARKER

Through Wesolowski's assistance, I interviewed Dr. Mack in his office, in Cambridge; interviewed members of his abductee group (including one who described cradling his space baby in his arms, then gave me his business card); and acquainted myself with the books Dr. Mack and his associates recommended—not only the standard U.F.O. texts but metaphysical gumbos like Stanislav Grof's "The Holotropic Mind" and "Beyond the Brain." I soon realized that mine was not a fresh incursion. Like the character in Evelyn Waugh's "Put Out More Flags" who couldn't venture anywhere without hearing reports of the poets Parsnip and Pimpernell, I kept bumping into the same name. Every source I consulted inevitably said, "Do you know C. D. B. Bryan? He's writing a book about all this." I abandoned the piece I was writing, but Bryan persevered. His "Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind: Alien Abduction, UFOs, and the Conference at M.I.T." (Knopf; $25), a selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club, is an unignorable book, because of the standing of the author, the clarity of his journalism, and lots of other stuff.

Like Dr. Mack, with his Harvard pedigree and his distinguished head of hair, C. D. B. Bryan confers quality and class on the abductee phenomenon by his establishment credentials. He tones up what could be a tacky field of bush-league paranoia. Bryan isn't a professional booster, like Mack, Hopkins, or Strieber, but an honored reporter, whose best-known book—"Friendly Fire," a classic account of an official coverup of a battlefield death in Vietnam and its effect on an American family—appeared in its original form in this magazine. (He has also written the official history of the National Geographic Society.) His starting point for this study was the Abduction Study Conference held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1992. Seated

"Hey, you've still got a job and I still get my can of food every night—what's all the whining about?"

high in the M.I.T. lecture room and looking down at the blackboards, Bryan is the sort of old-fashioned journalist Tom Wolfe dubbed the Gentleman in the Grandstand—a courtly observer with a fixed gleam in his eye. His role is not to judge but to maintain an intelligent murmur. Bryan reports and summarizes the testimony of the experts and experiencers, occasionally raising an eyebrow (as when a hypnotherapist from California claims that one of her clients who had previously tested positive for H.I.V. tested negative following an alien exam), but generally remaining as dryly absorbent as MacNeil/Lehrer. A model of neutrality, he's Mr. Mildly Inquisitive, a rational humanist galumphing from the lecture hall to the hotel restaurant, where the conferees have been given a group rate. The disjuncture between the cosmological talk and mundane reality has its comic moments, as when a pair of abductees explain over dinner the composition of the alien space council, presided over by a being named Zar—only to have the waitress interrupt, "Who's got the haddock?"

As the conference proceeds, the documentary screen of Bryan's attention begins to dissolve into a more personal reception: he picks up a tingle of otherworldly possibility. It isn't the official speakers at the conference who excite him—historians and researchers with their anthropological head counts of how many types of humanoids there are. (Lurking among the Small and Tall Grays are shifty, Iago-like reptile-men.) It's the abductees themselves who tantalize his imagination—average citizens who found themselves wriggling between invisible tweezers and treated like lab samples. The frozen fear that a couple of female abductees display in his presence strikes him as unfakable: "Their terror was heartfelt, real, and so palpable and raw I am concerned for their emotional well-being." Bryan's big revelation comes when he hears a woman describe how an alien tried on her high heels: "Her comment undoes me!" And he thinks, in a burst of italics, "*What possible reason could the woman have to make up an incident like that?*" The down-home nature of the detail strikes him as a convincing point in her favor. It isn't so much that he believes the abductees' stories as that he believes that they believe. They pass the sincerity test:

> During the days immediately following the conference, I am struck by how my perception of the abduction phenomenon has changed: I no longer think it is a joke. This is not to say I now believe UFOs and alien abductions are *real*—"real" in the sense of a reality subject to the physical laws of the universe as we know them—but rather that I feel something very mysterious is going on. And based as much on what has been presented at the conference as on the intelligence, dedication, and sanity of the majority of the presenters, I cannot reject out-of-hand the *possibility* that what is taking place isn't exactly what the abductees are saying is happening to them. And if that is so, the fact that no one has been able to pick up a tailpipe from a UFO does not mean UFOs do not exist. It means only that UFOs might not have tailpipes. As Boston University astronomer Michael Papagiannis insisted, "The absence of evidence is not evidence of absence."

Wolfe accused the Gentleman in the Grandstand of being reluctant to whip out his notebook and do actual reporting. Bryan isn't guilty on that count. He fills his notebook, then fills his pages. He does his homework, if you want to read homework. After Bryan's initial rush of enthusiasm, the book levels off into lengthy interviews with abductees and abduction experts, many of whom have polished their cosmic spiels into a routine. Dr. Mack, because he has either given too many interviews or indoctrinated his own mind, sermonizes in thick chunks of guruspeak. ("I think the whole notion of 'extraterrestrial' is a notion of dualistic thinking anyway. *We* are extraterrestrial in a sense: our psyches are not confined to Earth.") Lengthier and more troubling are the accounts of hypnotic sessions conducted on abductees by Budd Hopkins in his Manhattan studio. One woman dissolves into her memory pool to resurface with the suspicion that it wasn't her father who raped her on a fishing trip when she was twelve—it was an alien. After Lawrence Wright's "Remembering Satan," it's impossible to read accounts of recovered-memory cases without seeing the quicksand potential for misery and miscarriages of justice. Someone like Budd Hopkins, who frequently hypes abduction stories to the press (he's been pushing a doozy about a woman being whisked past the Brooklyn Bridge: a story so implausible that even the pop-science magazine *Omni* was highly dubious), really ought not to be bumbling around in other people's psyches.

What of the aliens themselves? Who are they, what do they want, and why do they keep taking our cattle? Are they gods? Colonizers? Energy blips? Next-door neighbors in a parallel universe? "Philosophers, physicists, psychologists, neurologists, neurosurgeons, biochemists, researchers, scholars, folklorists, abductees, and journalists alike circle this issue like dogs circling a spot on the rug, searching for a warm and comfortable place where they might set their intellects down," Bryan writes in his concluding chapter, before rattling off a roll call of names and hypotheses: "Keith Thompson suggests it is 'a prod to our next level of consciousness' "; "Carl Jung wrote that UFOs behaved 'like weightless thoughts' "; "Jacques Vallee asks whether UFOs are 'windows' rather than 'objects' "; "Peter Rojcewicz explains . . . "; and on through "Fred Allan Wolf suggests . . ." and "Julian Jaynes reports. . . ." Even Václav Havel gets a sound bite, intoning something significant about Gaia. When it's the author's own turn at bat, he seems dazzled by so many choices and opts for "heart," telling us how much he *wants* the abductees' stories to be true. "I care," he writes. His generosity of spirit has earned him praise. In the *Times Book Review* Dean Koontz chimed in, "No one should want to trade his rare kindness for yet another tome written by a sarcastic cynic. Indeed, the power of his straightforward writing left me not merely with an open-mindedness toward the subject of alien abduction but with a hope that many of the abductees are in fact telling the truth and that we are not alone in the universe." It's as if we were all supposed to fan our fingers around our faces like Doug Henning and flower with a "sense of wonder."

As one of those sarcastic cynics Koontz deplores (why should Fran Lebowitz have all the fun?), I found my own sense of wonder shrivelling like dead leaves when I started researching the abduction phenomenon. It was easy enough to pick the logical holes in abduction lore, in the bodily hysteria. (Why would entities capable of transcending space-time and wafting people through walls be conducting rudimentary Roto-Rooter rectal exams and siphoning semen?) The lack of corroboration was also telling, especially when the abductions were purportedly carried out in busy daylight. But, like Bryan, I was swayed by the abductees themselves. They bugged me. I came to feel that I was dealing with a quasi cult of deluded cranks. The abductees I interviewed, far from being people plucked out of the ordinary workday, had browsed the entire New Age boutique of reincarnation, channelling, auras, and healing crystals. They seemed to be testing how far they could take their personal narratives. Their confessions didn't need to be wrested from them; they were eager to expound their ardent monologues—so full of fetal imagery, from the womblike interiors of the spaceships to the baby-headed aliens, and so similar to accounts of being "born again." They felt similarly "chosen." For them, the aliens were agents of spiritual growth, guardian angels zooming around like the Jetsons. (This is the tack taken by Whitley Strieber in his latest opus, the breathtakingly vacuous "Breakthrough: The Next Step.") Beneath the spiritual growth spurt of the abductees was a pinched righteousness; the ones I met tended to be classic pills of passive aggression. Anger and distrust brooded beneath the surface. And they were touchy about their belief systems, however nebulous. Dr. Mack himself told me that he generally declined to appear in any TV debate with debunkers, because discounting the abduction experience was like denying the existence of the Holocaust, and he was not going to validate that point of view.

Dr. Mack recently underwent a peer review at Harvard for what some colleagues viewed as his questionable methodology. This June, he was also one of the targets at a meeting of some two hundred scholars at the New York Academy of Sciences, which deplored the rising tide of mush washing over the public mind, from astrology and religious fundamentalism to the blithe disregard of truth in postmodern epistemology; some participants urged that a hard line be taken against all this drivel. In his defense, Dr. Mack might be defined as a Third Wave thinker, for whom—according to Alvin and Heidi Toffler—there are no facts, only interpretations. Interpretations run roughshod over reality in times like these. Indeed, the one explanation for the outbreak of alien abductions which Bryan fails to cite in his closing chapter is the approach of the year 2000. That's a major omission. The historian Hillel Schwartz documents in his book "Century's End" how the fin de siècle uncorks a sense of reckoning and lets loose visions of damnation, salvation, natural disaster, chaos, and barbarism. Since we're coming to the end of not only a century but a millennium, no doubt

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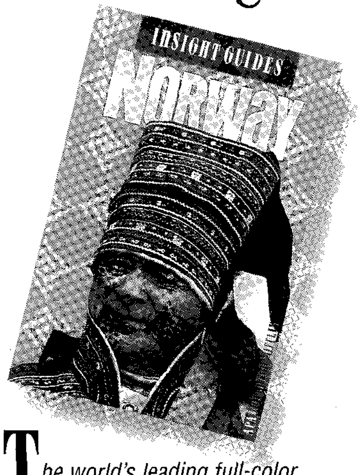

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even more daemons and phantoms are about to flood the portals. A liberal soul, C. D. B. Bryan welcomes this influx of diversity, which suggests happy hour at the bar in "Star Wars," and he offers an antidote to this prevailing fear of the future: "I am beholden to those people I met in the course of this book for having so richly populated the universe, our little 'blue pond,' and my imagination with 'the most marvelous of beings'—be they Small Grays, Tall Grays, Nordic-types, reptilians, John Mack's aerially adept 'Merry Tricksters,' or Carl Jung's 'materialized psychism.' "

But can we really afford to shut off our bullshit detectors and indulge every emanation of the occult? Superstition is no substitute for the salience of what's actually before us. It isn't as if the skies weren't already thronged with presences. In the words of Edward Abbey, in "Desert Solitaire," "I'd sooner exchange ideas with the birds on earth than learn to carry on intergalactic communications with some obscure race of humanoids on a satellite planet from the world of Betelgeuse. First things first." ♦

BIKER DAYS

Notes from the road to revolution.

BY PAUL BERMAN

Che Guevara

IN 1952, when Ernesto (Che) Guevara was twenty-three years old—still a medical student at home in Argentina, still two years from his first serious political commitment, still a long way from becoming the revolutionary comrade of Fidel Castro—he embarked on a tour of South America with his friend Alberto Granado. The two men stopped at a bar in Peru and cadged some much needed sandwiches and beers from a merry police sergeant, who proposed a hair-raising bet. If Granado would kindly stand twenty metres away with a cigarette in his mouth, the sergeant would light the cigarette with a single shot from his gun or else pay fifty Peruvian *soles*. Che's journal of this trip, never before published in English, has been given the title "The Motorcycle Diaries: A Journey Around South America" (Verso; $19.95), but in reality the motorcycle was a luxury that quickly broke down and was replaced by hitchhiking and rafting and sundry other travel methods suitable for a couple of nearly penniless vagabonds. So those fifty *soles* would have come in handy. But Granado wasn't tempted. The sergeant upped the offer. How about a hundred *soles*? Not enough? He laid two hundred *soles* on the table. That put a gleam in Granado's eye. But when the answer was still no, the sergeant took off his cap, tossed it in the air, took aim in a mirror, fired—and the bullet slammed into the wall. A complete miss! Then the woman who owned the bar blew her top, another policeman rushed in, Che and Granado fled, and those precious sandwiches and beer were lost forever.

The vagabonds went on to Cuzco, an ancient city—or, rather, two or three different cities piled one on top of another. The first of those cities, in Che's description, is the Cuzco of the Inca Empire, still visible in the ruins of its fortress. He writes, "This Cuzco invites you to turn warrior and, club in hand, defend freedom and the life of the Inca." Next comes the Cuzco of harmonious red tile roofs and Andean costumes. This Cuzco invites you to become a tourist. And there is a third Cuzco, "a vibrant city which bears witness to the formidable courage of the soldiers who conquered this region in the name of Spain":

> This Cuzco invites you to don armour and, astride a sturdy powerful steed, cleave a path through the defenceless flesh of a flock of native indians whose human wall crumbles and falls under the four hooves of the galloping beast. Each of these Cuzcos can be admired on its own, and we spent part of our stay looking at each of them.

A certain superiority of Latin America to the United States shows itself in that description. History in the United States is just as ancient as in Latin America and contains just as many layers and complications. But, except in a few remarkable places, the layers and historical complications in our own cities have been flattened out almost to the point of invisibility, and the loss is ours. On the other hand, Che's account of Cuzco reminds us how damnably confusing it is to gaze at a landscape and contemplate so much history. It makes no sense at all to cheer for the defeated Indians of the Inca Empire and then, one breath later, to cheer for the heartless Spanish conquistadores who slaughtered the Indians. But if you want to accept the several realities of Latin America what else can you do? Layered histories make layered personalities.

THE nominal reason for Che's trip was to investigate leper colonies. In San Pablo, Peru, he and Granado spent some time working in such a colony, which took courage. In a prologue to the book, Che's father, Ernesto Guevara Lynch, observes that Che's work in the leper colony hinted at the missionary impulse that would guide his life. In certain passages of the diaries we begin to see where that impulse will lead. A couple of Chilean Communists win his sympathy. An Indian militant in Peru impresses him with his fervor for Indian resistance. The most striking passage is one at the end, evidently written after Che's return to Argentina. In it he describes meeting a man in the mountains of an unnamed country, in a nighttime darkness so intense that all he can see are "the two sparks of his eyes and the white of his four front teeth." The spectre with two eyes and four teeth predicts a revolutionary cataclysm: "The future belongs to the people and gradually or suddenly they will take power, here and all over the world." But before that happens, he says, many will have to die, and among those unfortunates will be Che himself. The man tells him, "You will die with your fist clenched and your jaw tense, the perfect manifestation of hatred and struggle, because you aren't a symbol (some inanimate example), you are an authentic member of the society to be destroyed." That is more or less what did happen some fifteen years later, when Che, having already helped bring Fidel Castro to power in Cuba, was killed trying to expand the guerrilla insurgency to Bolivia.

The barroom tales, hitchhiker episodes, medical adventures, and political ruminations in "The Motorcycle Diaries" make for a bumpy ride. Some of the prose experiments wobble out of control. This is a sketchbook, not a finished work of literature. But there is a pathos in these pages—the pathos of Che himself, ever thoughtful, ever willing to sacrifice all, burning with guilt over his own privileges and suffering continually from severe asthma but never letting his sufferings impede him. The diaries, translated with something of a British inflection by Ann Wright (who has also translated "I, Rigoberta Menchú"), come to us from an edition that was prepared by the Che Guevara Latin-American Center in Havana, which has endowed the book with an additional pathos of its own. In a prefatory note, the Cuban organization informs us that Che's growing sense of Latin-American identity, as it is shown in the diaries, allows him to be seen as "a precursor of the new history of America."

Who can believe such a thing today? How many people can still suppose that Che's beloved Communism will someday glue together the splintered Indian-and-Spanish identity of Latin America, put an end to Latin America's painful subservience to the United States, bring social justice to the land, and in those ways create "the new history"? Yet it's good to be reminded that for about thirty years a large number of people all over Latin America did regard Che Guevara as the precursor of an ardently desired Communist future, and that tens of thousands of those people, possibly hundreds of thousands, died during the guerrilla insurgencies that were meant to bring that future into being. And so it is possible to read these diaries and to weep for Che Guevara, and it is possible to weep for the many people who were brave enough to be his followers and who may have harbored a thousand delusions about Communism but who can never be accused of having chosen a less than noble soul as their revolutionary hero. ◆

RECOMMENDED READING

The Riders
by Tim Winton
(Scribners; $23)

After a pretty, plainsong start in Ireland, where Scully, an amenable Aussie with a "severely used" face, is laboring to make an abandoned house inhabitable for his soon-to-arrive wife and child, the pace quickens: Scully shows up at the airport and only his seven-year-old daughter gets off the plane. The two then begin a wounded free fall through expat Europe—island Greece, train-station Italy, the Paris Métro—as Scully burns through his AmEx and his sanity tracking his wife. The reader longs for the empty Irish home but, like Scully, can't turn away from the trail of disaster. The curse of this haunting book is that you read it too fast.

Splitting
by Fay Weldon
(Atlantic; $21)

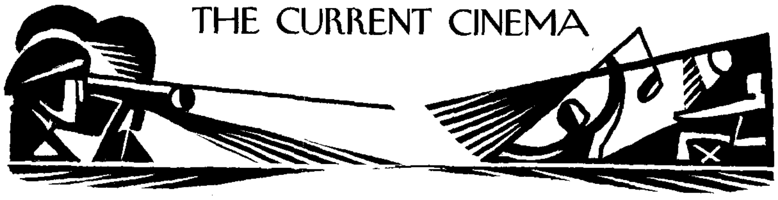
Not only is Sir Edwin Rice splitting from Lady Angelica Rice but Angelica herself seems to be splitting, too—into, among others, Angel, who likes sex with strangers, and Jelly, a demure secretary conveniently but not coincidentally working for Edwin's divorce lawyer. Familiar Weldonesque high jinks ensue, though at times they seem to be as capricious—and also as lubricious—as Angel's sexual preferences.

Athena
by John Banville
(Knopf; $22)

Banville's latest novel unfolds in an unidentified city whose thoroughfares bear names like Rue Street; it's the perfect theatre for the kind of blank dread that this author depicts with peculiar exuberance. The hero is Morrow, an idler who is absorbed into a plot to authenticate eight stolen paintings by artists whose names are anagrams of the author's. Morrow's disquisitions on them reveal both the lapsed state of his learning and his growing obsession with a lover identified only as A. In the end, their kinky quest for sexual honesty turns out to be a sham, much as the paintings turn out to be second-rate fakes—well, all but one.

South of the Big Four
by Don Kurtz
(Chronicle; $19.95)

In a world-weary gesture, Arthur returns to the Indiana farmhouse where he grew up. His first night back, he sets up a cot in the kitchen, "and from that point on that was all the world there was, three feet wide." But people soon encroach: his girlfriend begs him to run away with her, his sister-in-law wants to seduce him, and a friend is in danger of losing his farm. Arthur's quiet, intense narration is all build-up; the climax of this richly detailed first novel is as unexpected as it is appropriate.



GROWING PAINS

Two new films—one American, one French—look at the teen-age condition.

BY TERRENCE RAFFERTY

LARRY CLARK'S "Kids," which follows some New York City teen-agers through a day and a night of largely self-destructive activity, is bound to strike many adult viewers as a grim cautionary tale—a nightmarish vision of what young people are actually doing when parents, teachers, and social workers aren't keeping an eye on them. (In this movie's terms, that means most of the time.) The subjects of "Kids" manage to kill twenty-four hours by hanging out and then drifting off again, moving from one place to another only to forage for drugs, alcohol, and sex. The rhythm of their lives is maddeningly erratic; long stretches of boredom alternate with manic bursts of stimulation. Clark's teen-agers seem to be wandering in total darkness, and their nihilism outdoes even the celebrated pessimism of Generation X; compared with these kids' attitudes, slacker indifference and grunge melancholia look like ringing affirmations of spiritual values. Grownups are always willing to be shocked by the behavior of the young, and Clark's movie should provide the perennially outraged with plenty of meat for their decline-of-civilization rants. In the movie's disturbing final shot, one kid, Casper (Justin Pierce), wakes up after a party, looks straight at the camera, and says, "Jesus Christ, what happened?" Sociologists and editorial writers will be happy to supply answers.

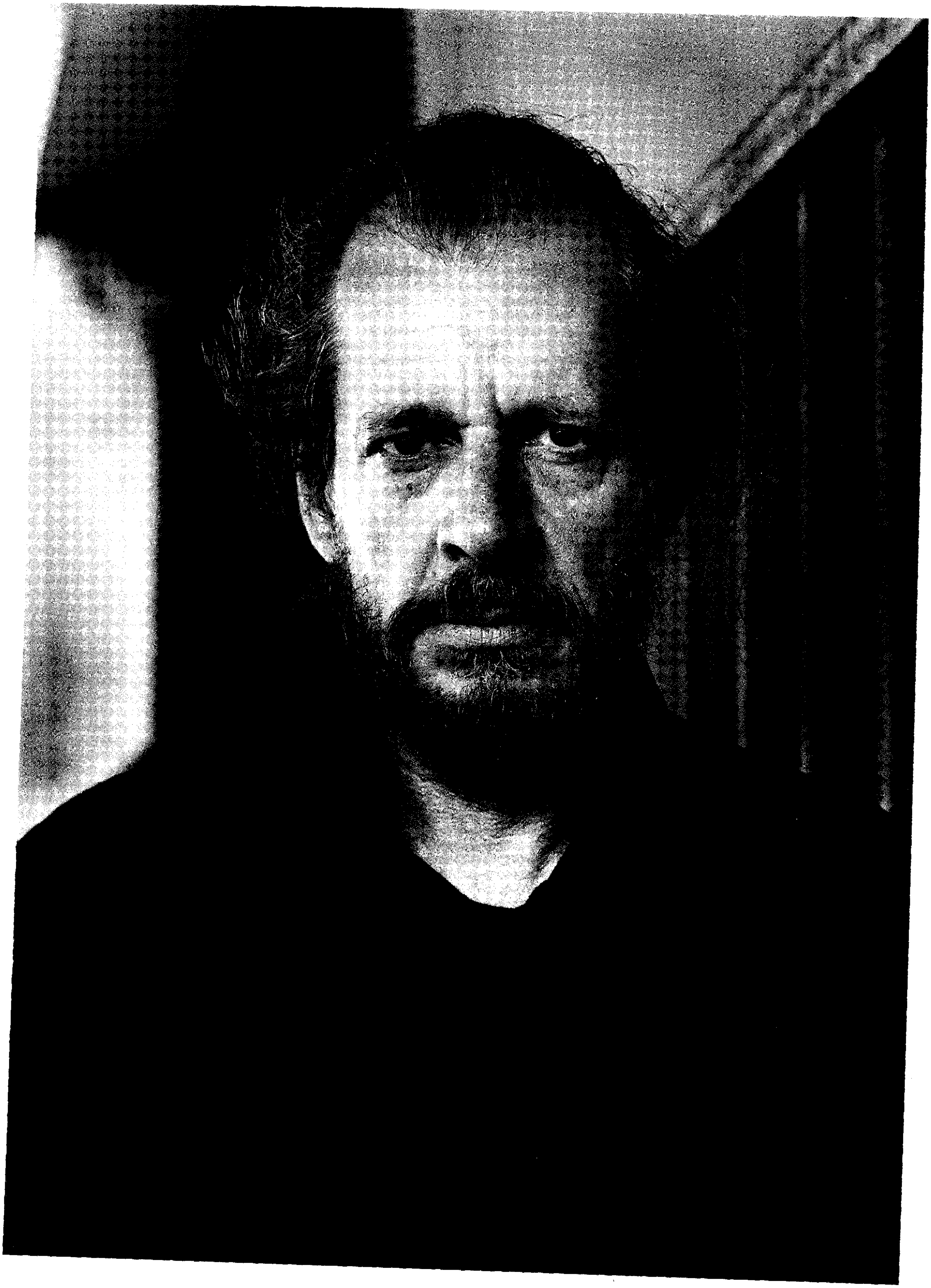
They're going to have to, because the film itself is resolutely neutral on the big social questions. Clark isn't didactic, or even particularly analytic: he merely observes—an anthropologist documenting the rites of a newly discovered tribe. "Kids" is shot in the style of cinéma vérité, with real locations, natural light, and lots of handheld camera; the actors are non-professionals. And the screenplay, by Harmony Korine (who was nineteen when he wrote it), is essentially a series of casual encounters connected by a single thread of plot: a girl, Jennie (Chloe Sevigny), who has just learned that she is H.I.V.-positive, roams the city in search of the boy who infected her. Telly (Leo Fitzpatrick), the kid who seduced and abandoned her, is a teen-age Casanova, constantly on the prowl; he likes virgins, because they'll always remember him, and as Jennie looks for him—just missing him everywhere she goes—we watch him drawing a bead on a fresh victim, a sweet girl named Darcy (Yakira Peguero). This story line gives the picture a mournful undertone and, perhaps more important, a bit of old-fashioned suspense: with Clark crosscutting from Telly's pursuit of Darcy to Jennie's search for Telly, the movie sometimes feels like a raw, nineties version of a maiden-tied-to-the-tracks silent melodrama. The bitter joke of the story is that Telly's everyday life is so random—his movements so purposeless—that he's almost impossible to chase down.

He's no more elusive than Larry Clark. Part of what makes "Kids" fascinating is that you can't get a fix on the filmmaker's point of view. Clark's documentarylike technique and his loose, one-thing-after-another narrative approach suggest a clinically objective (or, at least, nonjudgmental) attitude toward the bad behavior, yet the movie's imagery and its over-all effect are far from dispassionate. The camera caresses its subjects visually, in frequent long pans across the faces and the bodies of kids who are waiting for something to happen or who, having made something happen, slump unconscious in untidy heaps, like exhausted soldiers sprawled in trenches after battle. Clark's perspective isn't anything so simple as a mixture of sympathy and horror. It's more unsettled, and more unsettling, than that. Although "Kids" will undoubtedly be received as a wakeup call, a sobering report on a lost generation, its deepest impulses, I think, are romantic. Clark's love, and even admiration, for the recklessness of the young is unmistakable. He's more concerned with the texture of teen-age anomie than with its causes or its consequences, and the obsessive, ardent gaze he turns on his subjects as they stumble toward oblivion has a strange aestheticizing effect: he can't help transforming these wasted, aimless kids into icons of the beautiful and damned.

"Kids" is a first film, but an unusual one in that it's the product of a mature, fully formed artistic sensibility. Larry Clark is a fifty-two-year-old photographer, whose first book, "Tulsa" (1971), immediately established him as an original talent—sort of the *poète maudit* of the snapshot school. "Tulsa" is a pitiless, eloquent chronicle of the born-loser milieu that Clark moved in during the sixties and early seventies: the pictures show scrawny, mean-eyed young folks shooting up and waving guns and lolling in squalid beds and attending funerals. The book's uniqueness lies in its startling confessional tone: it's the family album that most families keep hidden away. Clark's second book, "Teenage Lust" (1983), is explicitly autobiographical, but, since "Tulsa" apparently used up the most vivid part of the artist's life, this volume finds him casting about desperately for ways to recapture the charge of his fast-living youth. He throws in all sorts of stuff: childhood photographs, newspaper clippings about his various arrests, pictures that look like outtakes from "Tulsa," several thousand words (obviously transcribed from tape recordings) of rambling autobiography, and, most revealing, photographs of teen-agers who seem to be standing in for a Larry Clark who no longer exists. He reproduces a note he wrote in 1974: "Since I became a photographer I always wanted to turn back the years. Always wished I had a camera

PHOTOGRAPH BY HELMUT NEWTON

Larry Clark, Cannes, 1995.



when I was a boy. Fucking in the backseat. Gangbangs. . . . A little rape. In 1972 and 73 the kid brothers in the neighborhood took me with them in their teen lust scene. It took me back." In "Kids"—and in his most recent book, "1992," an infuriatingly repetitive collection of portraits of teen-agers—Clark appears to be taking himself back again and again.

It may be this nostalgic-voyeuristic aspect of "Kids" that accounts for the movie's peculiar intensity. Something more than journalistic curiosity, or even imaginative empathy, is pumping through the images, giving them their heat-lightning glow. Clark peaked early, with a first book that was a perfect fusion of art and life, and such magical-seeming success can be a burden. For an artist, a happy accident isn't so different from a catastrophe: you have to keep trying to figure out what happened, or else live with the possibility that it will never happen again. "Kids" is "Tulsa" in Manhattan, but, powerful as the picture often is, it's also melancholy proof that the past isn't easy to recapture, and that bygone pleasure can turn sour when it's forcibly transplanted to another medium and another time. The movie unfolds as if it were telling a story, but its ultimate effect is that of a photograph—a mute, suggestive image that invites us to complete its meaning with our own imagined sense of a narrative context. In a feature film you experience that sort of evocative elision merely as a coy omission, and it seems perverse: watching "Kids," you keep wondering, irritably, why Clark isn't providing more background for his characters, why he refuses to fill in the details that could make these kids seem more individual and less emblematic.

And in movies the line separating empathy from heroic fantasy is perilously thin. Whatever Clark's intentions were, his identification with the heedless and often violent young people on the screen sometimes shades into a kind of envy, which doesn't sit well in a story that's basically about kids killing themselves. Adults may be appalled at what they see in "Kids," but teen-agers could take the film as a celebration of a live-fast-and-die-young ethos. That's the danger of confessional artists who have exhausted themselves as subjects: they start confessing through other people and wind up turning themselves on with memories of past transgressions. Looking at others, they see themselves, but what the audience sees is something else—a kind of ghostly superimposition that blurs the features of both artist and subject. The fatal flaw of "Kids" is that Larry Clark doesn't give his characters, or the audience, the benefit of the knowledge that he has acquired, through his art, in the years that have passed since his own hell-raising youth. He allows the kids in this picture to end as they began, in ignorance. Ultimately, he's content to let the whole movie boil down to a blank stare and a poignant sense of ruin. It's hard to shake the feeling that "Kids" could have told us what happened but chose instead to leave a beautiful corpse.

WHAT distinguishes Clark's movie from virtually every other film about teen-agers is that it isn't constructed as a coming-of-age story. (It is, pointedly, about *not* coming of age.) Coming-of-age movies are often unbearable, not because there's anything inherently wrong with the form but because the wisdom that adult filmmakers drum into their youthful protagonists is usually pretty lame: after an hour and a half of trials and contrived misadventures, the hero or heroine learns the Golden Rule. If the movie is French, young Jean or Jeanne receives instruction in the pleasures of the flesh from an attractive grownup and emerges with a bittersweet bonbon of truth on the order of "Love is transitory." André Téchiné's "Wild Reeds" is a coming-of-age story, and French besides, but there isn't anything easy or conventional about it, and it doesn't end with a rueful Gallic smile. It's a more daring picture than "Kids," because Téchiné acknowledges that the process of learning is unpredictable and painfully imprecise, instead of merely denying that it exists.

Téchiné's teen-agers live in a complicated time: the movie, which is based on the filmmaker's own adolescence, is set in 1962, the last year of France's bloody struggle in Algeria, and political tensions run high, even in the quiet provincial town where the characters live. The movie begins, as many French pictures do, with a country wedding, but this ceremony is less joyful than it appears to be: the bridegroom, a soldier, confides to a former teacher that the sole reason for the marriage is to avoid his being sent back to Algeria. Among the guests is a teen-age intellectual, François (Gaël Morel), who is present, reluctantly, as the escort of his not-quite-girlfriend, a young beauty named Maïté (Élodie Bouchez); he couldn't persuade her to skip the wedding and go see a Bergman movie. He recognizes the groom's brother, Serge (Stéphane Rideau), a classmate whom he barely knows, and holds in light regard Serge is beefy, handsome, and, by François's standards, too stupid to be very interesting. In the course of the movie François's opinion changes drastically: at school, he and Serge become, for one night, lovers. And, although their encounter is never repeated, François learns something important from it: he's gay. The fourth major character, Henri (Frédéric Gorny), is also a classmate of François's; he's older than the other boys, and haughty, abrasive, and unpopular. He has a serious chip on his shoulder: as a French Algerian, he feels betrayed by France's policy of granting independence to its former colony. His teachers and classmates don't sympathize; they view Henri and his kind as evil exploiters. Eventually, François falls in love with him, too.

"Wild Reeds" sets up the characters' conflicts—internal and external—with masterly ease, and follows them toward resolutions that are tentative but real. Téchiné's visual style, which is distinguished by smooth, complex tracking shots, is ideally suited to the story he's telling. The movie flows like a river, and the characters sometimes fight the current, sometimes give in to it, and sometimes just swim to the bank and watch the water go by without them. Téchiné simply takes them from one point to another, from juvenile ignorance to a place where they can see themselves, and others, a little more clearly, and he makes that short journey look momentous. Few movies dealing with teen-agers have been so accurate about the moral and emotional urgency of adolescents' attempts to understand their lives, or so forgiving of their failures. "Wild Reeds" is André Téchiné's twelfth feature. (Only five have been released theatrically in the United States.) It won France's top movie award but opened in New York a few weeks ago with very little fanfare. It's an extraordinary picture—the best French film since Eric Rohmer's "Summer," in 1986. Téchiné gives the ordeal of coming of age the respect it deserves. ♦

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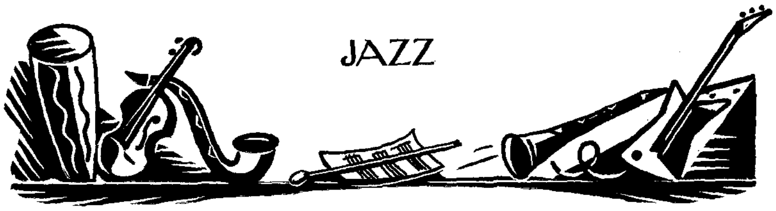
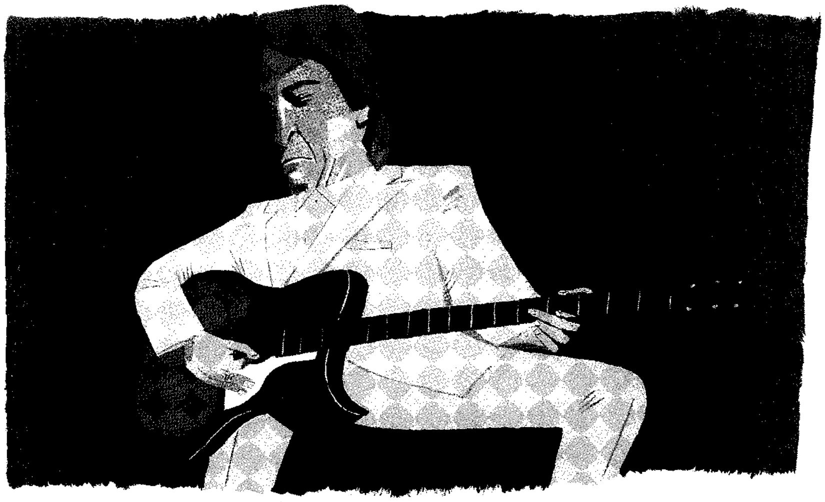


THIS THING CALLED SWING

Three generations of musicians are still making that elegant and succinct sound.

BY WHITNEY BALLIETT

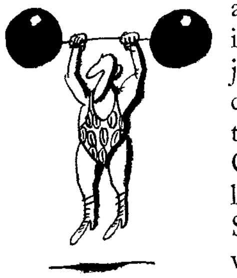
THE seventh definition of the noun "swing" in the tenth edition of Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (1994) reads, "jazz played usu. by a large dance band and characterized by a steady lively rhythm, simple harmony, and a basic melody often submerged in improvisation." In its fanciful phrasing ("a basic melody often submerged in improvisation," as if the soloists were a kind of marinade) and its several inaccuracies (swing was played by bands of every size; its harmonies—*vide* Duke Ellington—were often subtle and complex; and its rhythms ranged from slow to very fast), the Webster definition suggests both the loopiness and the tendentiousness of much current jazz reviewing. Swing flourished from 1935 to 1945 and, once it had recovered from the body blows of bebop, rose again in the fifties and early sixties. The music was carried forward by the first consummate jazz soloists (Louis Armstrong, Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Roy Eldridge, Red Allen, Jack Teagarden, Benny Goodman, and Art Tatum) and by Count Basie and Duke Ellington, who created the first great jazz orchestras, themselves full of celebrated and wonderfully eccentric soloists.


Gray Sargent: The neo-swing guitarist matches the sheer, unmannerly momentum of Roy Eldridge and Coleman Hawkins.

MARK ULRIKSEN

Swing was an eloquent, to-the-point music, a noble music often played by blue-collar musicians. It was governed by rhythm (a steady 4/4 beat, propelled by accents on the second and fourth beats), by melody (the standard thirty-two-bar popular song and the twelve-bar blues), and, indirectly, by the three-minute time limit of the old 78-r.p.m. recordings, which forced you to say what you had to say in eight or sixteen or, occasionally, thirty-two bars. The strange, almost presumptuous business of these pioneer soloists was to alter and improve their materials through melodic embellishment, melodic improvisation, or improvisation based on the chords of the tune. The best swing soloists did what they were supposed to do by seemingly sabotaging the system; that is, they played hob with the beat (slowing it down, speeding it up, even stopping it), sometimes obliterated the original melody completely, and used confounding devices like blue notes, unruly timbres, and "wrong" notes. When they succeeded, the result was often great beauty. Swing was apolitical, amoral, and color-blind. It invited you in, pleasured you, and often changed you forever.

Jazz has become institutionalized in New York, and the front office, currently at Lincoln Center, is run by the Oz-like triumvirate of Wynton Marsalis, Stanley Crouch, and Albert Murray. Marsalis, the nominal C.E.O., leads the teeming neo-hard-boppers, who, their recording contracts in their hatbands, have taken over much of the New York jazz scene. This cavalcade makes a lot of noise, but if you listen carefully you'll hear another, very different sound, coming from deep in the jazz woods, and it is being made, softly and succinctly, by no fewer than three generations of swing and neo-swing musicians. The oldest generation ranges in age from the seventies to the low nineties, and is quite astonishing. Indeed, its members constitute the oldest functioning musicians jazz has ever known. Clark Terry (seventy-four) is still Jack-be-nimble on the trumpet, and so is Doc Cheatham (ninety), who may have been startled to read Peter Watrous's recent observation in the *Times* that Cheatham has "blossomed" as an improviser only in the past five years. The alto saxophonist Benny Carter (eighty-seven) remains elegant and glacéed, and the tenor man Flip Phillips (eighty) still comes in two editions—the up-tempo rocket and the slow-ballad dreamer. The trumpeter Joe Wilder (seventy-three) corners as gracefully as ever, while Milt Hinton (eighty-five) continues to talk and play bass with inexhaustible garrulity. The violinist Claude (Fiddler) Williams (eighty-seven), a member of the original Basie band, has resurfaced, and recalls Stuff Smith and Ray Nance. And visible again is the old-time, ready-or-not alto saxophonist Benny Waters (ninety-three), who in the nineteen-twenties taught Harry Carney. Terry, Wilder, Williams, Hinton, and Waters, along with Buddy Tate (eighty) on tenor, Al Grey (seventy) on trombone, and Panama Francis (seventy-six) on drums, play on a cheering CD on the Arbors label called "Statesmen of Jazz"; and Wilder can also be heard on his own Evening Star CD, "Joe Wilder: No Greater Love," along with Seldon Powell (sixty-six) on tenor.



The succeeding generation of swing musicians came up in the nineteen-fifties, and they are in their late sixties and early seventies. Two of them—Bob Wilber and Dick Hyman—are indispensable jazz archeologists, who have rescued and restored King Oliver, Sidney Bechet, and Jelly Roll Morton. (It is curious that almost all the members of this generation of swing musicians are white, and that it is they who have refurbished the music of the great early black jazz musicians. It is also curious that Wilber and Hyman have never been consulted by the producers of the revival programs at Lincoln Center; in fact, this omission has been one of the grounds for the persistent grumbling about reverse racism which has been directed toward those programs.) Wilber and Hyman are extraordinary musicians. Wilber plays alto and soprano saxophone and clarinet, and he can bring Johnny Hodges and Bechet and Benny Goodman to life, while Hyman, a pianist who has no obstructing style of his own, can brilliantly reproduce Basie, Art Tatum, Duke Ellington, Fats Waller, James P. Johnson, and Teddy Wilson. (Hyman, together with Hinton, Wilder, Urbie Green, Frank Wess, and Bucky Pizzarelli, fashions intense re-creations of Ellington, Basie, and Goodman on "Dick Hyman: From the Age of Swing," a Reference Recordings CD.) But the heavyweights among the second-generation swing players are Gerry Mulligan, Ruby Braff, Dave McKenna, and Jimmy Rowles. Mulligan, now wreathed in godly white hair, is a famous, ubiquitous baritone saxophonist, an exceptional arranger, and an inventor of excellent small-jazz-band surprises—his lyrical, gliding pianoless quartet of the early fifties, which brought Chet Baker to the fore, and his late-fifties sextet, with Zoot Sims and Bob Brookmeyer, which experimented with loose, jammed ensembles. Braff is a Louis Armstrong worshipper who has never aped the Master but has developed a cello tone, an almost fretting scalar agility, and a love of the trumpet's lowest register, where he makes Paul Robeson sounds. (Braff can be heard on "Ruby Braff and His Buddies" and "Ruby Braff and His Quartet," live recordings made by Arbors at the Regattabar, in Cambridge.) The pianist Dave McKenna, a huge man, who in his rumbustious days liked to knock his colleagues' heads together, came up in the classic time of Nat Cole and Art Tatum. He has an easy touch and an overpowering thrum-thrum-thrum on-the-beat left hand, and he swings so hard he divides the air before him. (McKenna appears on the first Braff recording, and his new solo album, for Concord, is "Dave McKenna: Easy Street.") Another pianist, Jimmy Rowles, is living in semi-retirement in Los Angeles. His witty melodic lines start and end in midair, and they observe eccentric, ingrown patterns. Or non-patterns. He invites you to follow him, then vanishes around the next corner. He and McKenna are probably the best accompanists in the world. (Rowles recently released a solo album, "Lilac Time," on the Kokopelli label; and "Heavy Love," the stunning duet recording he made in the eighties with the tenor saxophonist Al Cohn, has been reissued on a Xanadu CD.)

THE third wave of swing players, now in their thirties and forties, began appearing in the late seventies. Instead of imitating the previous generation, they went back to Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young, to Buck Clayton and Bobby Hackett, to Charlie Christian and Django Reinhardt. They were led by the tenor saxophonist Scott Hamilton and the trumpeter Warren Vaché. The guitarists Howard Alden, Chris Flory, and Gray Sargent came soon afterward, followed by the tenor saxophonists Ken Peplowski and Loren Schoenberg, the latter a skilled arranger and the leader of his own big band; by the trombonist Dan Barrett; and by the trumpeters Spanky Davis, Randy Sandke, and Jon-Erik Kelso. (Peplowski and Alden are on a duet album, "Ken Peplowski/Howard Alden," and they are also on "Ken Peplowski & Friends," along with Bucky Pizzarelli, Sandke, Alden, and Joe Wilder. Both recordings are on Concord.)

Perhaps the most irresistible of these players is Gray Sargent, who often turns up in Illinois Jacquet's big band. His loose, slightly twangy tone recalls Charlie Christian, and his style suggests the way Christian might have developed. (Christian died at the age of twenty-six, in 1942.) Sargent constantly and outrageously bullies time, placing his notes a fraction behind or ahead of the beat, using silence as sound, suddenly knocking us down with rushing, ringing octave chords. He matches the sheer, unmannerly momentum of Roy Eldridge and Coleman Hawkins and Sid Catlett. Study his solos in "Struttin' with Some Barbecue" and "Love Me or Leave Me," on "Ruby Braff and His Buddies." And on the duet CD he made with McKenna, "Dave McKenna & Gray Sargent," on Concord.

It's not easy to hear the neo-swingers in the flesh. They turn up at small festivals in Pennsylvania and New Jersey and California, and at Dick Hyman's series Jazz in July, at the 92nd Street Y. And, since so many of them are New Englanders, and New Englanders tend to take care of their own, they appear at the Regattabar and on the Cape. Maybe the neo-swingers, some of them pushing middle age, are the last valid swing musicians we shall have. Search them out.

When Connie Kay died, late last year, he had been the Modern Jazz Quartet's drummer for forty years. (An astonishing figure; only Sonny Greer's twenty-eight years with Duke Ellington comes close.) Atlantic has issued a commemorative album, "Dedicated to Connie: Modern Jazz Quartet," a newly discovered recording of a concert the M.J.Q. gave in Yugoslavia in 1960. In the liner notes the Quartet's pianist, John Lewis, writes, "Never before or since has the Modern Jazz Quartet played better, whether on stage or in the recording studio." Well, the album has its marvels and its longueurs. What matters is that it is beautifully recorded and Kay is caught at the top of his form. Near the end of "Fontessa," he takes a cymbal solo that has the jubilation of church bells, and, all the way through, his snare-drum accents, foot-pedal work, ride-cymbal patterns, and wire brushes have ebullient restraint. Someone recently wrote dismissively that Kay had become a "percussionist." But only a percussionist could handle the rhythmic complexities of much of the M.J.Q.'s material. And only a swinging drummer could have made the Quartet shine for so long. Albert (Tootie) Heath, Percy Heath's younger brother, has taken over the drum chair. Heath is a smallish man, and Kay was six feet three. The shoes won't fit. But Kay didn't fit into Kenny Clarke's shoes, either, when he first replaced him, so long ago. ♦

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MUSICAL EVENTS

SCREENING THE MUSIC

What happens when movie scores become live performances?

BY PAUL GRIFFITHS

NOBODY is surprised when a conclave of violinists arrives in a motel bathroom to help murder the leading lady. Nobody turns a hair at the presence of an orchestra while the army of Novgorod is battling it out with Teutonic knights on a frozen lake in the thirteenth century. Nobody minds that an orchestra is there when Robin Hood and his companions ride through the forest, or when Cleopatra has herself unfurled from a carpet before Antony, or when any number of nameless monsters emerge from any number of gleaming steel pods. Movie music isn't merely a convention; it's a habit. Just as nature abhors a vacuum, so the cinema abhors silence, and when there aren't people talking we seem to need music to maintain a human voice, a human rhythm. This may even be the main purpose of the film score: not to tell us what to feel but to reassure us that someone is there, that this vision we've been forced to take over doesn't have to be our responsibility—someone else is looking after it for us. (Perhaps this is how Muzak works, too: by giving real life its own backing score, in the hope we'll feel consoled by the implication that somebody out there is in control.)

Just as music was introduced into the movies to alleviate the embarrassment of there being nothing to hear, so we now seem to be witnessing the backwash of movies into the concert hall to lift what anxiety we may feel, in an age dominated by visual imagery, at having nothing to look at. Recently, the Philharmonic gave some performances of Prokofiev's score for Eisenstein's "Ivan the Terrible" with scenes from the film to accompany the music; next season, a similar exercise is planned, with Virgil Thomson's music for "The Plow That Broke the Plains," at BAM, where last winter Philip Glass provided an entirely new score for singers and ensemble to accompany a screening of the Cocteau movie "La Belle et la Bête."

"Ivan the Terrible" was the second Prokofiev-Eisenstein project to be mounted by a team including John Goberman as producer, William David Brohn as musical arranger, and Yuri Temirkanov as conductor. A few years ago, they presented "Alexander Nevsky," whose complete score is now available on compact disk and, with the film, in video formats. According to Mr. Goberman, the principal object with "Nevsky" was to bring the music out from behind the heavy veil of the 1938 soundtrack, and to do so not by reproducing the original film score, which is laid out for a studio orchestra, but by recording a new version by Mr. Brohn, for symphonic forces. Mr. Brohn based his work on the concert version Prokofiev made soon after the movie was released; additional sections he painstakingly transcribed from the soundtrack. So now we can hear, in brilliant modern sound, musical sequences that, because they didn't make it into the concert piece, hadn't been played since 1938—sequences such as the one for percussion alone where the ice breaks under the battle.

An interesting issue is raised here. If we can replace a score we deem inadequately recorded, we could also replace a scene we think didn't come off, or, with the right technology, an individual performance we consider could be improved upon. You didn't like Jean Simmons in "Spartacus"? O.K., shoot Michelle Pfeiffer in the role and edit her in. Film, which has seemed a cryogenic kind of drama, is on the edge of a new age of flexibility, and we can look forward to having our favorite movies available in multitudes of different versions, starring performers of diverse generations.

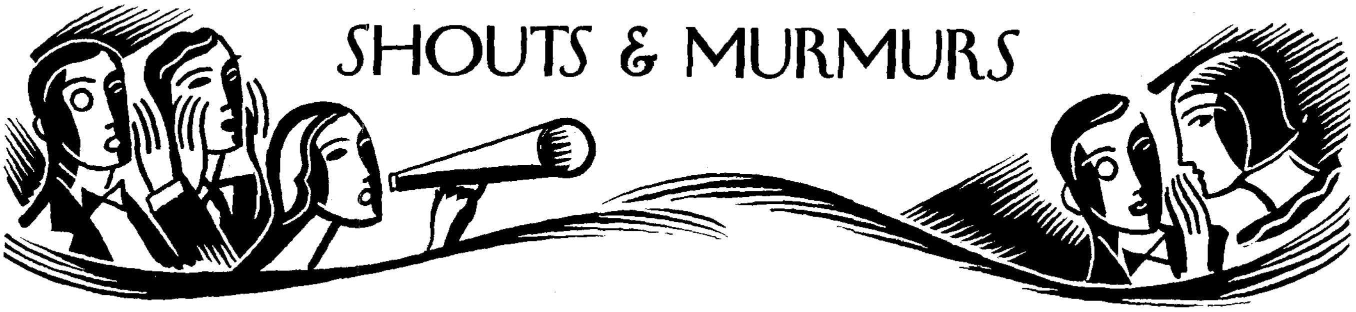
MORE immediately, these Prokofiev-Eisenstein revitalizations make film into a real-time performance art, since it's now possible for the score to be performed by live musicians in synchrony with the picture show, as at the Philharmonic's "Ivan the Terrible" concerts. The movie itself becomes the subject of the performance. With an orchestra playing along beneath the screen, we seem to be at a reënactment of the soundstage recording of the score, and the drama of the forging of the Russian state takes second place to the drama of the forging of the film. In the case of "Ivan," that internal drama has some power. Eisenstein's movement, by jump cuts from one image to another, has a completely different rhythm from that of Prokofiev's symphonic sweep; the long sequence portraying the siege of Kazan becomes a dialogue between two kinds of time—brutal instants and grand progress. This rhythmic discord may, paradoxically, be crucial to the success of Prokofiev's collaborations with Eisenstein (though that success is diminished in "Ivan" by comparison with "Nevsky," possibly because Prokofiev couldn't raise the same enthusiasm twice, as witness his blithe reuse for the Kazan scene of a big tune from his opera "War and Peace"). Film, like music, is polyphonic, moving simultaneously at different speeds: the speeds of the camera, the action, the dialogue, background events. Eisenstein's willingness sometimes to freeze movement—even more than his willingness to include song and dance episodes—allows music to come forward and steer us through time in its own manifold ways.

More momentary sorts of drama are possible. Close to the start of the Philharmonic performance, in the coronation scene, there was a magical transition when the old soundtrack was quietly joined by the live sound of women's voices in chorus. However, I'm not sure Prokofiev's score quite justifies the attentions of a crack orchestra for ninety minutes. Mr. Temirkanov and the Philharmonic may have had similar doubts, for there was sometimes, and especially at the end, a sense of people shouting to make themselves heard against some distraction. Also, the exercise seemed a bit like a CD-ROM session brought awkwardly to life. The performance had a general shape, thanks to the retention of most of the film narrative (the flashbacks in the second part were the main casualties) and to the use of the scene in color as a finale, but it was—as much as Eisenstein's cinematography—full of stops and starts: sections of music without film, and sections of film without music, of which the latter included, for no obvious reason, the long scene between Ivan and Metropolitan Philip. Deconstruction without reconstruction is more the nature of life at the computer than the nature of time spent in the concert hall. From the musical point of view, "Ivan the Terrible" is not a big cultural item; its value is, rather, as a collection of materials that can tell us something about the combining of sight and sound. It's something to play with, not to sit in earnest witness of.

Mr. Glass's movie opera offers a more integrated and cogent experience. Because he accepts Cocteau's vision as given, he may appear to be adopting a subservient attitude, and yet his music runs sublimely on its own course. Contrary to what happens in the Kazan scene of "Ivan the Terrible," in "La Belle et la Bête" the score is static while the pictures flow on. The music re-situates the movie in a dream time of eternal repetition; it also shows a splendid disregard for events. When, just occasionally, a diminished chord seems to chime with some ominous turn in the story, so that one has the brief feeling that the music really is noticing what's going on, it's as if a robot were to smile. But what the score can't ignore is the text. Mr. Glass's music is designed to synchronize with the film, which means that the words, all sung, sometimes have to be enunciated at quicksilver speed, well beyond what's natural for singing characters. So one gets to feel that in fact these aren't singing characters at all: they're ministers of words, for strangely silent creatures on the screen—assistants to those creatures, rather like the people in a Noh play who support an actor's costume or reclothe him. The film looks cherished, fragile, and, because the instrumental music stays in a very different rhythmic world, out of reach. Mr. Glass has pressed his music into the mold of the movie, and produced something quite different—so different that it works extraordinarily well on record, separated from the movie. This is the best sort of film music: music that couldn't have existed without the movie but doesn't need it now. ♦

And you are full of hog manure, fresh, if you think for one moment that some of us don't know that this IRS presence in our nation is for no other purpose than to recruit funds for subversive purposes back in Ireland.—*Editorial in the Taylorville (Ill.) Daily Breeze-Courier.*

No wonder Gingrich wants a tax cut.



SHOUTS & MURMURS

NAME DROPPINGS

BY HART SEELY

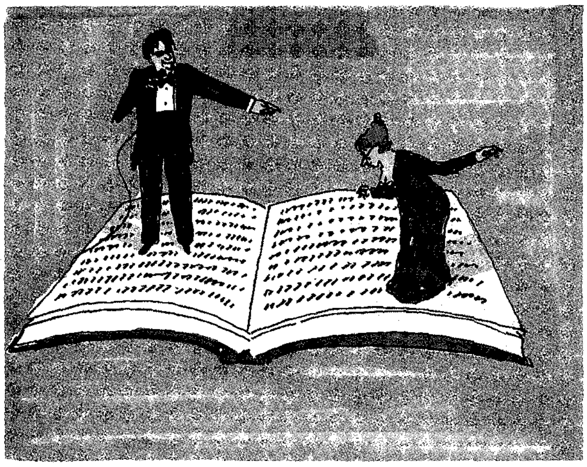
A famous entertainer walks the earth like a colossus, befriending heads of state, captains of industry, and, most important, fellow-stars. Linked by the agony of fame, they view one another as peers. Thus, nowhere are the shapers of culture described more keenly than in the historical manifesto known as the celebrity autobiography, a body of literature that allows the rest of us to understand what it's like to live among giants—and know they like you. Consider some examples:

Adam West (with Jeff Rovin): "The Pope smiled broadly and shook my hand gently. I remember thinking how smooth his skin felt, how ethereal his touch. He was very impressive. . . . He said, 'I love your television show, Mr. West.' " ("Back to the Batcave," 1994)

Richard Pryor (with Todd Gold): "I met George Carlin at the Café Au Go Go and introduced myself to Woody Allen at The Bitter End. Woody said, 'Stick around, watch me, and you'll learn something.'

"But oddly, I learned more from a hooker in Baltimore." ("Pryor Convictions," 1995)

Geraldo Rivera (with Daniel Paisner): "They were kidding, and giddy, but there was also something seriously competitive going on between them. Nureyev said, over my shoulder, to Jagger, 'He's a virgin, *you know*.' " ("Exposing Myself," 1991)



Vanna White (with Patricia Romanowski): "Hef said to me, 'Vanna, I would never do anything to hurt you.'

"I replied, 'Hef, this would hurt me.' " ("Vanna Speaks," 1987)

Peggy Lee: "Much as I liked Rita Hayworth, I thought my sister should have won the prize at my clown party." ("Miss Peggy Lee," 1989)

Bob Geldof (with Paul Vallely): "Jesse Jackson detached himself from his entourage and approached me afterwards. 'I'll be in London soon. You give me your phone number and we'll get together, go out and knock some heads together.' " ("Is That It?," 1986)

Minnie Pearl (with Joan Dew): "Believe me, you haven't seen Hawaii until you've seen it with Jim Nabors." ("Minnie Pearl," 1980)

Drew Barrymore (with Todd Gold): "I knew I was going to take a drink that night. It was Rob Lowe's birthday party." ("Little Girl Lost," 1990)

Mickey Rooney: "Milton Berle showed me the ropes. It was he who took me to my first brothel." ("Life Is Too Short," 1991)

RuPaul: "There they were—the King and Queen of America. They were like excited fans: 'Oh my God I've got to get my picture taken with RuPaul!' said Kurt. . . . Then Courtney handed me their baby, Frances Bean." ("Lettin It All Hang Out," 1995)

Neil Sedaka: " 'I've been a great fan of yours for a long time. My name is David Bowie.'

" 'Yes, I've *read* about you,' I lied." ("Laughter in the Rain," 1982)

Joan Rivers (with Richard Meryman): "That night Barbra Streisand was simultaneously having a fight with her boyfriend, Jon Peters, and dickering to buy a diamond ring from Diane von Furstenberg. Jack Nicholson got so high he went to the ladies room by mistake." ("Still Talking," 1991)

Sonny Bono: "We were being introduced to Jackie Kennedy, the most revered woman in America, and there was no time to think. . . .

" 'Your haircut is almost Shakespearean,' Jackie said to me, a comment that seemed complimentary." ("And the Beat Goes On," 1991)

Joe Franklin (with R. J. Marx): "He told me the starlet's name: Marilyn Monroe. I said I'd see what I could do.

"One night we were working late on the manuscript. I was astonished to feel her hand on my knee. I stammered a weak protest. The rest is a fog of Chinese food and Garry Moore. She had a very severe biological need, a strong biological urge. I would characterize her as straight-ahead, unemotional, businesslike. Not kinky." ("Up Late with Joe Franklin," 1995)

Annette Funicello (with Patricia Romanowski): "When I first heard *that* Ozzy was to be my partner for the piece, I admit I was a little taken aback. Like most people, I'd heard the bad publicity about his biting the head off a dove and later (though accidentally) chewing the head off a bat." ("A Dream Is a Wish Your Heart Makes," 1994)

Shelley Winters: "Elvis would often come to my house, once bringing me a sack of manure for my dried-up lawn." ("Shelley II," 1989)

O. J. Simpson: "I went with him to the cleaners before they closed, and his stuff wasn't ready. It was the weirdest thing to me. It was Willie Mays and his stuff wasn't ready." ("I Want to Tell You," 1995) ♦

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